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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

IDEAS IN THE FICTION OF VICTORIAN CANADA:
JAMES DE MILLE, AGNES MAULE MACHAR, AND ROBERT BARR

BY

LEONARD VANDERVAART

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Ideas in the Fiction of Victorian Canada: James De Mille, Agnes Maule Machar, and Robert Barr," submitted by Leonard Vandervaart in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

David Jackel ....
Leslie Monkman ....
Dale Wilkie ....
....
Doug Owram ....

Date: .....April 21...... 1989

For Christine

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of three Victorian Anglo-Canadian writers and their works in relation to the period's ideas. Assisted by, and incorporating, recent work by Canadian intellectual historians, this study considers these writers' fictional attempts to reconcile the period's various intellectual tensions (idealism and empiricism, imperialism and nationalism, critical inquiry and moral authority).

The first subject of study is James De Mille and his dystopia, A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder. Published posthumously in 1888, De Mille's novel was likely written some three decades earlier, near the outset of the Darwinian revolution; the novel, indeed, reveals what historians have shown was the mid-century fear that new directions in scientific inquiry increasingly threatened the stability of the past. Though De Mille attempts a reconciliation of the period's tensions, his novel finally can only offer grim warning of the spiritual and social topsy-turveydom he believes will come.

The second writer and work considered is Agnes Maule Machar and her novel Roland Graeme, Knight (1892). A social gospel writer and an ardent imperialist, Machar reveals in her work an optimistic belief that the materialistic tenor of the age can be redeemed by the revitalizing power of idealism. As historians have shown, however, social gospel idealism rested upon insecure ground, and thus Machar,

by her novel's end, can only await a future as uncertain as that offered by the enemy of her idealism, evolutionary naturalism.

Robert Barr, the final writer considered, affirms what historians have shown was the late Victorian triumph of materialism and modernism over idealism. Though also an imperialist, Barr, in his serious fiction and in his best novel, The Measure of the Rule (1907), shows that he is not prepared to return to an era and mind fast fading. Barr may be in the Victorian period but he is of the new century, a man too much attracted, however cautiously, to the new age's liberalism and progressivism to go back.

Although all three writers failed to reconcile satisfactorily the period's tensions, their fiction nevertheless presents us with a honest reflection of the fears and uncertainties of an age in transition.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In a 1952 address before the National Conference of University Teachers of English, the distinguished Canadian literary critic Desmond Pacey suggested a number of potentially profitable areas of research in Canadian literature. Among these areas was one which Pacey believed might appeal to "any student interested in the history and diffusion of ideas"; moreover, it was an area, he implied, which could be of particular importance to the understanding of certain nineteenth-century Canadian writers. "We need to investigate the relation of literature to the various currents of ideas which have circulated throughout Canada," Pacey urged, and to illustrate where such study might be especially rewarding, he raised "a few of the questions" which future research "might profitably" attempt to answer:

> In speaking of the poetry of [Bliss] Carman and [Charles G. D.] Roberts, critics frequently refer to their transcendentalism [,but what] is the exact nature of transcendentalism, as they express it? Is it an accurate copy of the transcendentalism of Thoreau or Emerson, or is it significantly modified

> to suit the Canadian environment? . . . [And] where did [Archibald] Lampman derive the ideas, particularly the social ideas, which animate his later poetry? Was a vague sort of Utopian socialism common in intellectual circles in Canada in the late nineteenth century, or did Lampman borrow it directly from William Morris? When did the Darwinian hypothesis begin to make impact on Canadian habits of thought? ("Areas" 61-2)

The challenge and the questions which Pacey raised, typical of his literary sense and foresight, were very good ones. As significant as they were, however, almost as revealing was the caution which Pacey appended to his appeal for historical research. "To state that Canadian literature offers a rich field for academic literary research," Pacey felt inclined to remind his audience, "is not necessarily to imply that Canadian literature is itself a luxuriant growth." "We need have no illusions about the quality of Canadian writing," said Pacey, although he added the observation that "[a] stunted plant may offer more excitement to the investigator than its more prolific neighbour" (58).

The conclusion that, in the words, ironically, of the nineteenth-century poet Charles G. D. Roberts, "literature has been a plant of slow growth on Canadian soil" (422), the belief that, indeed, the study of this frail plant, its soil, climate and conditions, is at best an intriguing but finally limited study of stunted culture, has become, of course, something of a commonplace in criticism of Canadian literature. Just five years after Pacey's address, for example, Wilfrid Eggleston made the same judgment, by way of the same metaphor, the thesis of his study The Frontier and Canadian Letters: "belles lettres in Canada," wrote Eggleston, "began as a transplant from the ancient literary culture of Northwestern Europe, into a soil and climate which was not, on the whole, favourable for the vigorous growth of such a transplant" (151). And just under a decade after Eggleston, in a now-famous evaluation--though he insisted it was not meant to be such--in his "Conclusion" to the first edition of The Literary History of Canada, Northrop Frye, Canada's most famous and influential literary critic, uttered the same pronouncement, changing only the metaphor: if evaluation were the "guiding principle" of criticism, said Frye, then "criticism of Canadian literature would become only a debunking project, leaving it only a poor naked alouette plucked of every feather of decency and dignity" (333).

The commonplace assumption or charge that Canadian literature, and especially early Canadian literature, is inherently undignified and undeveloped--that such literature, especially, is not truly indigenous--is, of course, a serious one, one that should be made carefully in the first place, and one that, once made, needs periodic reconsideration or revaluation. And if such a reappraisal is now timely, it is a reappraisal best accomplished, not by way of another metaphor, one which flatteringly provides decent and dignified comparison where earlier ones have not; not by way of critical methods or approaches which are blindly and zealously nationalistic. It is a reappraisal that might best be conducted by way, ironically, of the very method called for by Pacey in 1952, the method which simply attempts to see the literature for what it is in its context. The appraisal, or reappraisal, as the case may be, of early Canadian literature within its historical intellectual context, that is, within the context of its philosophical, social, and political ideas, is a method or an approach which has rarely been attempted thoroughly and successfully; indeed, it is a method which has played too small a role in the criticism of Canadian literature.

For once again Frye's critical position can be seen as typical. If one imperative of Frye's critical approach is that criticism of literature should be "value-free," another related Frivian assumption is that, in words from the Anatomy of Criticism, "literature shapes itself, and is not shaped externally" (97). The anti- or a-historicism of Frye's critical approach is something that seems to have been adopted by a generation of critics after Frye. Recent criticism's tendency to eschew the historical is evident, for example, in the literature which critics have selected for critical examination; the novel engagé in Canada, as

Robin Mathews has so vehemently argued (131), and the novel of ideas, for another, have not received full and adequate consideration. The ahistoricism of contemporary critical writing is also evident in the way that the literature is studied: criticism of Canadian literature has become consumed by searches for thematic patterns that are believed to characterize Canadian literature--"the colonial mentality," for example, or "the garrison culture," the "hostile wilderness," or the "survival" syndrome--searches which essentially find their inception in the mythopoeic search for patterns of the human psyche which, according to theorists such as Frye, transcend the historical and "earth-bound." As one critic of Frye has warned, however, the mytho-thematic approach to Canadian literature "is the reverse of nationalistic [;] . . . it is instead squarely in the continentalist" tradition that has "been steadily obliterating the distinctive qualities of the Canadian identity" (Jackel 228). If, therefore, the distinctiveness of the Canadian literary identity is to be recovered and preserved, Canadian criticism must first rediscover its sense of history.

Among the recent works by historians that may help Canadian literary criticism recover a valuable historical perspective is the study of the ideas of Canadian imperialism, The Sense of Power, by Canada's foremost intellectual historian, Carl Berger. That study, the first of several by recent Canadian intellectual historians who have begun to distinguish and describe a particularly Canadian history of ideas emerging in Victorian and early twentieth-century English Canada, ironically has initiated work which should be the concern of Canadian literary critics. For example, Berger's study of Victorian Canadian imperialism, and of that influential movement's interpretation of "Canadian history, character, and destiny"--its conception of "nationalist thought" believed to be "compatible" with the preservation of "imperial unity" (3)--is in part based upon the examination of literary texts, especially fiction, by William Kirby, Sara Jeannette Duncan, Stephen Leacock and others. Indeed, the examination of these authors and their works by Berger and others suggests that these authors and works have the potential for helping us, in a literary context, resolve our national quest for identity. Indeed, however difficult it seems for us to understand this, it is remarkable, and also ironic, that for Kirby, Leacock, Duncan and many others of this period, the question of the Canadian identity, which has become the archetypal Canadian question, was not any longer an issue. As Berger concludes his study, providing by the way some cause for modern reflection:

> Imperialism belongs to the remote past but the problems with which it grappled and the state of mind it represented are not totally

> unrecognizable in the present. The imperialists are excellent examples, not of men who quested for the Canadian identity, but of those who had already found it and who tried to bring reality into alignment with their vision. They are a salutary reminder that our own mental outlook, which seems so coherent and final, so free from extravagance, is unlikely to appear that way to posterity. (265)

Posterity may be closer at hand than expected, at least in the history of Canadian criticism: one American reviewer of the first edition of the Literary History of Canada, Arlin Turner, while not presuming to question the work's judgements, nevertheless felt compelled to comment on "the emphasis on failure" and the "note of disappointment [that] echoes through much" of the work: "the scholars writing . . . are no less preoccupied with defining the Canadian identity than the novelists and the poets and the historians [that they write about] have been," observed the reviewer, who expressed his trust, moreover, that subsequent literary historians will "feel [this preoccupation] less intensely" (528). Indeed, the preoccupation with failure may be more self-inflicted than we are willing to admit; and perhaps a renewed examination of our historical and literary past will lead us to feeling this self-defeating preoccupation with identity less intensely.

Nor is it only the Victorian Canadian Tory and imperialist thinker or writer who shows such remarkable confidence regarding the Canadian identity and, more importantly for the purposes of working towards the definition of a particularly Canadian mind, who shows such consistency regarding conceptions of the Canadian nation, history, and character. Such confidence and consistency is far more widespread in Victorian Canada than has formerly been admitted. This is suggested by a number of other recent important contributions to Canadian intellectual history, S. E. D. Shortt's The Search for an Ideal, A. B. McKillop's A Disciplined Intelligence, and Ramsay Cook's The Regenerators. These studies show that thinkers and writers at various stages of the Victorian period, and of various philosophical and political minds and temperaments, forced as they all to some degree were to stand on the edge of an "awesome intellectual precipice" of modern thought and belief (Shortt 3), very often responded in remarkably similar and consistent patterns of thought. Diverse as were the ideas of the six Canadian intellectuals whom Shortt considers, for example, their thought, argues Shortt, takes one of two "primary orientations [that] underlay the thought of the period," the one orientation toward idealism, and "associated with intuition, romanticism, metaphysics, and Christianity"; the other toward empiricism, and associated with "positivism, materialism, cultural relativism, and the social sciences" (139).

It might be objected that the presence of two such broadly antithetical poles or traditions of thought hardly argues for the existence of a single national mind or vision. And indeed there is some validity in the objection. What studies by Shortt and others working in the field of intellectual history cast in doubt is a monolithic image or conception of Canadian national character, history, politics, and identity. If there is a Canadian mind or a larger Canadian tradition distinguished by these studies it is not simply a "traditionalism," with "orthodoxy in religion, conservatism in politics, and resistance to innovation in art" (Waddington 125); nor is it the converse, a modernism, with heterodoxy in religion, liberalism in politics, and radical innovation in art. Traditionalism and modernism, orthodoxy and heterodoxy, conservativism and liberalism, idealism and empiricism, all are in fact present in Victorian Canada (and after), but they are present primarily, as Shortt's choice of terminology suggests, as orientations, as the poles to which writers and thinkers have tended. Where historians have begun to distinguish the emergence of a particularly Canadian mind, where indeed there is often a consistency and a similarity, is not only in these writers and thinkers' thoughts or in the ideas themselves, but in the dialectical patterns of thought between the poles or modes of thought that Shortt describes, and in the end to which such dialectics are directed. As McKillop explains:

> Caught historically between a British heritage, which many of them conceived to contain the best elements of Western civilization, and an American neighbour, which advanced ineluctably towards modernity in its modes of thought and action, Anglo-Canadians in the Victorian era sought to establish and preserve a broad moral code that would constitute the core of a way of life reconciling belief and inquiry, tradition and innovation, concern and freedom. (Disciplined Intelligence ix)

Even though Victorian Anglo-Canadian writers and thinkers might begin from, work within, and arrive at, conclusions consistent within one of the two different mainstream Canadian political or intellectual orientations--the imperialist-nationalist or the liberal-progressivist, the idealist or the empiricist--their thinking nevertheless frequently shows a reconciliatory tendency, a tendency aimed at the preservation, formation, and articulation of a broad moral, ethical, and intellectual middle-ground. And thus a study of writers and thinkers of the period, even writers and thinkers as politically and intellectually far apart, for example, as a George Parkin, zealous propagandist for the cause of Imperial unity, and a William Dawson Le Sueur, "Ottawa controversialist" and frequent Loyalist baiter (Berger, Sense of Power 83-4), reveals a remarkable unity of thought that at once attests to, and is the result of, the pervasiveness of a stock or a currency of uniquely Canadian Victorian ideas. Though politically committed to an often strident imperialism, George Parkin's Tory mind, for example, could nevertheless admit, because it had been philosophically shaped by idealism and its positivistic social corollary (introduced to Canada by Queen's University philosopher John Watson), to the progressivist belief that "national intelligence and material wealth ever go hand in hand"; that, indeed, the nineteenth century showed "an amount of change, improvement, and general advancement, which far exceeds in nature and extent, the accumulated progress of many preceding centuries" (qtd in Berger, Sense of Power 119). Moreover, precisely because of such philosophically idealist belief in moral and material progress (which, as Berger observes, held "no dichotomy between the material and the spiritual" [Sense of Power 219]), and because of philosophical idealism's corollary that the progressive advance of human reason or intelligence would lead to the progressive formation of "a moral community itself . . . conceived in universal, organic terms" (McKillop, Disciplined Intelligence 198), could Parkin (and other imperialists) envision Canada--as a nation, not as a colony--taking a leading role in the rejuvenation of the empire. And Le Sueur, a liberal thinker who, as McKillop says in A Disciplined Intelligence, "was an unabashed exponent of the new evolutionary science" (135), a writer whose "primary concern . . . was with the intellectual life and the necessity for critical intellectual inquiry" (142), nevertheless was a free thinker whose social philosophy (informed, as was all of his work, by Comtean positivism) was paradoxically "almost Burkean" in its conservative conception of "the organic nature of society and [in] the necessity of subordinating individual to social ends, whether in the political process or in the process of thought" (149). "The man who has a strong impulse to think, desires to think with others, or at least desires others to think with him; for he knows that whatever is true is true for all, and whatever is important is important for all," wrote Le Sueur in an 1882 essay, "Free Thought and Responsible Thought"; "he does not therefore seek to fence himself off from the rest of mankind, but takes up his work on a continuum of what others have done before him" (62-3). "Despite his commitment to a naturalistic philosophy which insisted that man and society had to be understood in secular rather than theological terms and that natural, not divine laws, were the keys to man's behaviour," Le Sueur, as Cook says, "was above all a man of the golden mean. . . [B]ehind [his] apparent open-mindedness lay a firmly held set of [moral] convictions" (42). That so conservative a thinker as Parkin could be so remarkably progressive and forward-looking, and that so liberal a thinker as Le Sueur could be so remarkably conservative and backward-looking, seems testament to the argument that what consistency of thought there is in

Victorian Canada, exists not only or even primarily in the end result or finished corpus of duplicated ideas but exists also or mostly in the dialectical means, in the process, of attempting to reconcile the conflicting claims of the nation's fundamental tensions.

The historiographic recognition of so significant an interaction of intellectual traditions and ideas would seem to compel the literary search for, and recognition of, such in the literature of the period. Moreover, it may be that work by literary historians and critics is as crucial to the understanding of our intellectual heritage as work done by historians. In "Nationalism, Identity and Canadian Intellectual History," for example, McKillop has emphasized the need for "a conception of Canadian historical experience in broadly cultural terms"; and in support of his contention he observes that "the list of writings in Canadian literature that can serve . . . as excellent sources by which to gain a sense of the _esprit_ _de_ _finesse_ of any given period in Canadian intellectual and cultural history would be a substantial one" (545). And in his _Canadian Literature: Surrender or Revolution_, critic Robin Mathews makes essentially the same point. Mathews may describe the complex relationship between ideas, history, and literature (or the literati) somewhat too simply, but his observations are nonetheless valid:

> The dialectics of a country--the most important, continuing tensions which define its inner dynamic--are related to the choices it has made, to the pressures it must respond to internally and externally. . . . The thoughtful people in the country understand the terms of its intellectual history, the tensions and conflicts of the country's historical dynamic, because they live the intellectual history, microcosmically, in their own lives from day to day. As time passes, the people of the country begin to recognize the most significant aspects of the dialectic and they recognize, too, the artists in the community who present the terms of the dialectic most vividly, most truly. (6)

That Canada even possesses a recognizable, coherent, and truly historic inner dynamic, let alone, more specifically, that it has been the Canadian artistic--or, particularly, the literary--community that has best been in a position to recognize and represent that dynamic, is a perception which, as we have seen, has been only slowly forthcoming. Moreover and more especially, that Canadian writers of prose fiction have been in a position to represent that dynamic is even less likely to be acknowledged.

Yet Victorian fiction and the Victorian novel in Canada merit special study in relation to the interplay of ideas of our literary, cultural, social and political past. Not only, of course, does fiction achieve unprecedented popularity in the Victorian era, but the nature and the forms of fiction, and of the novel in particular, also lend themselves well to the analysis--and potentially, the reconciliation--of such intellectual tensions (idealism and empiricism, imperialism and nationalism, order and progress, critical inquiry and moral authority) as historians have begun to define as our national intellectual dynamic.

Too often and for too long, however, have the Victorian novel and Victorian fiction in Canada been traduced, the victims of hasty generalization. If Canada is ever acknowledged as having a significant pre-modern national literature, it is from the ranks of the poets that such a literature is seen to have emerged. For most who choose to see the emergence of a national literature in the Victorian era, the poetry of Roberts, Carman, Lampman, D. C. Scott, represents that beginning. Not all their poetry, of course, is said to effect or represent that emergence of a national voice or imagination; rather, that voice and imagination is most truly said to be represented by the lonely, haunting, "cold pastoral" nature poetry which, in its attempt to confront the "riddle of unconsciousness in nature . . . that no moralizing or intellectualizing can answer" (Frye, "Conclusion" 356), prefigures in tone and substance the early modern attempts, by A. J. M. Smith and others, to capture the Canadian imaginative experience of a "harsh and lonely land." That only such personal and essentially inward-searching--in many ways, existential--literature represents or best represents the Canadian historical imagination and experience seems to have become a near unquestionable assumption.

Yet the Victorian era in English Canada has produced literature in forms other than the short lyric. In fact, the unusually strong tradition of the narrative poem in nineteenth-century Canada (antedating the lyrics of the Confederation Poets) is one indication of strong literary impulses other than the personal, the private, and the inward-looking. Even if, as Frye says, the narrative poetic form, with its "natural affinities . . . with tragic and ironic themes" rather than with the "manipulated comic and romantic formulas of prose fiction," is therefore still consistent in tenor with lyric poetry that also sees the Canadian environment as "terrifyingly cold, empty and vast" ("Conclusion" 355), surely the continued turning to this form also suggests the strength of the impulse of writers to write within forms broad enough to incorporate and recreate experience wider and more diverse than the merely private and inward.

And if that is true, how much more suited to such broader representation of the Canadian experience--the public as well as the private, the social as well as the personal--are the forms of fiction. Modernist literary prescriptions, however, seem to have precluded the recognition of such, or at least, the recognition that such broader views may be just as, or more, significant a representation of the Canadian experience and imagination. Although The Literary History of Canada, for example, acknowledges the diverse and significant attempts by the "more skilful" fiction writers of the period (Grant Allen, Sara Jeannette Duncan, Ralph Connor, Lily Dougall, Stephen Leacock, and Robert Barr, among others) to dramatize "new scientific and social ideas" (Roper et al., "Kinds" 326), to define "distinctions between Canadians, Americans, and the English" (Roper et al., "Writers" 329), or to present a "conflict between two codes of ethics, or a search for an ideal life" (Roper et al., "Writers" 333), their fiction, we are finally told, "was not personal, subjective, or inward searching"; few of their fictional characters "had any quarrel with their world; few felt alienated from it" (Roper et al., "Writers" 352). So curiously modernist a prescription for the Victorian Canadian novel has led to the critical consensus which now seems questionable, even when stated by so sensible and respected a critic as Desmond Pacey: "[the] novel . . . , until very recently [the 1920s, he means, in the period of Frederick Philip Grove], has not flourished in Canada. With few honorable exceptions, our novelists seem cursed with timidity; they make few technical experiments, and they restrict their gaze to the more pleasant and superficial aspects of life" (Creative Writing 269-70).

The present study, a literary analysis of a selection of works by Anglo-Canadian writers, an analysis which is assisted by, and which incorporates, recent work by Canadian intellectual historians, will, I believe, imply the untenability of such a prevailing critical consensus. Though limited to the consideration of a representative selection of writers--three authors, whose thought and work collectively spans the period, from early, through middle, to late stages of the Victorian era in Canada[1]--the study inductively may suggest the need for a far more comprehensive reexamination of Canada's literary fictional past, and may suggest as well the need for a revision of current critical thinking about, and critical approaches to, that past.

The study begins with a consideration of James De Mille and of his most significant literary endeavour, A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder, in relation to Victorian ideas and concerns identified by intellectual historians. In spite of some recent signs of a renewed critical interest in De Mille's unusual work, A Strange Manuscript yet awaits sustained examination by literary critics. Indeed, the novel has yet to overcome completely the assessment given by the Literary History of Canada, that it is an incredible but "good adventure story" spoiled by the author's "pseudo-serious" satiric intentions (Cogswell 127). To date the work has at best secured a status as a kind of underground classic, an anomalous book, an idiosyncratic intellectual and literary exercise which belongs outside the mainstream of Canadian literature. "Literatures are defined as much by their lacks as by their abundances" ("Absence" 3), writes George Woodcock before proceeding to use De Mille's work in an attempt to define what Canadian literature is not. Certainly De Mille's novel is a remarkable one, not only or mostly in itself, however, but especially in relation to the Victorian Canadian context. Though it was published in 1888, the novel, never completed to the author's satisfaction, was published posthumously. Indeed, close contextual study of the work suggests a period of composition for the novel that antedates, or more accurately, perhaps, that bestrides, 1859, the year of publication of Darwin's On the Origin of Species. For the novel is a fine fictional or literary testimony to what intellectual historians have shown was the early- and mid-Victorian Canadian concern that new directions in Victorian scientific inquiry--new directions which shortly led to the Darwinian revolution--increasingly threatened the religious and intellectual stability of the past. Moreover, for De Mille the empiricist tenor of the age was manifest not only in the speculative scientific ideas current in the era; it was also manifest, more directly and concretely, in the social tendencies of the period and in its political ideologies. For De Mille, for example, as for many Canadian imperialists, the United States especially represented the empiricist or materialist spirit of the time writ large: the republic's democratic liberalism, its progressivism, and its perceived social atomism and anarchy were plain to see and fear in all their godless power and force. De Mille's response, in A Strange Manuscript, to such speculative and social and political threats is not, however, dogmatic denunciation of the evils of the age. Indeed, his response is an attempt to discover a via media between idealism and empiricism, between intellectual, social, and political conviction and intellectual, social, and political anarchy. His response is, nonetheless, an attempt which, as it tries at all costs to avoid falling victim to orthodox dogma and didactic moralism, is tenuous and faltering, ultimately falling victim instead to the author's own insecurities, his tired defensiveness, and even his anti-intellectualism.

Apparently far less uncertain and hesitant in the attempt to reconcile the age's empiricist and progressivist spirit with the verities of the past was Agnes Maule Machar in her one significant fictional venture, Roland Graeme, Knight (1892), the second subject of contextual analysis in this study. The rapid industrialization and urbanization of the later Victorian period in North America having reached, in the Victorian Canadian mind, near crisis proportion, Machar is a social gospel writer, and her work an idealistic social gospel response to that crisis. However, the social gospel's apparent avoidance of theological and philosophical debate and inquiry, (the anti-intellectualism of the earlier De Mille now domesticated and seemingly sanctioned, as it were), makes Machar's thought and writing seem to the modern mind to be but safe and shallow Victorian optimism; her novel, in the current critical estimation, is little more than a trite and didactic panacea for Victorian social ills, a soft and superficial vision of a future social utopia. While James De Mille has benefited, as Carole Gerson observes, from at least some recent "renewal of interest," Machar has "enjoyed no such attention" from recent criticism (208); The Literary History of Canada's judgement of Machar and her work, that she is a writer in the "genteel tradition" and that her novel "is essentially a romantic story of high society" and one which "preaches . . . noblesse oblige" (Watt 477), has not yet been seriously challenged by literary critics.[2] And, it cannot be denied, Machar is an optimistic writer. She is not, however, superficially so. A careful reading of her novel in relation to historiographic analysis of the period's ideas and concerns, and in relation to her own prolific prose contributions to periodicals of the time, shows not simply a shallow social optimism about the future of North American society but rather an intellectual optimism that the prevailing progressivist, empiricist, and materialistic tenor of the age--even as it seemed to be so forcefully manifest in the American republic--could be philosophically harmonized with, and, as it were, redeemed by, the revitalizing power of idealism. Machar's attempt to reconcile the various tensions of the age, however, like De Mille's, was ultimately also a largely failed attempt, as she herself seems to have in part recognized. It was an attempt that was overcome, ironically, by the unstoppable forces of the very materialism that all her life she so ardently fought.

The subject of the third and final portion of this study, the late Victorian writer Robert Barr, offers testimony to what historians have shown is the late Victorian triumph of materialism and modernism over Victorian idealism. A writer with close to twenty volumes of fiction to his credit, Barr published, between 1894 and 1907, four novels that warrant careful examination in the context, and one of these, A Measure of the Rule (1907), shows especially the author's attempt to reconcile the intellectual and ideological tensions with which he wrestled in all his serious work. Barr, however, was an expatriated Canadian, living and writing in London, England, and thus, although he is the most confident and accomplished of the three writers studied here, he has been virtually ignored in Canada. Even though in his serious literary efforts, as the Literary History of Canada admits, "he drew on his Canadian experience," Barr remains essentially a footnote to Canadian literature, a could-have-been Canadian writer who instead became a cosmopolitan British popular writer devoted to "entertaining the sophisticated Anglo-American reading public" (Roper et al., "Writers" 328). A careful examination of Barr's serious fiction in relation to the period's ideas and concerns, however, reveals that, beneath the Edwardian urbanity, wit, and sophistication which doubtless characterize part of his life and thought, there linger clear signs of his formative years in Canada. Barr was an imperialist, a Canadian imperialist, apparently as ardent a one as was Machar. For him, as for many imperialists, the Canada of his youth and early adulthood, the land of clean air, wide spaces, and vast resources, symbolized the social and economic hope of the rejuvenated imperial future. And for him and for other imperialists as well, the United States represented the gravest threat to that future. Yet absent from the core or heart of Barr's thought and writing is the metaphysical idealism which so profoundly characterized Machar's thought and which De Mille so carefully attempted, if unsuccessfully, to preserve; absent from Barr's imperialist thought, for example, is that overwhelming sense of idealistic mission that drove an imperialist like Machar to believe in--to hope, pray, and write for--a social and political future which would unite all Anglo-Saxondom, and perhaps even the larger international community, in the victorious struggle over a debasing modern scientism, empiricism, and materialism. For Barr, his undeniable attraction to idealism notwithstanding, was ultimately a pragmatist and a realist; he seems to have been ever mindful that he himself epitomized the liberal, progressivist ideal of the self-made man--his rise to fortune and recognition having been accomplished by way of escape from Canada to early success in the United States--that his writing, fiction and non-fiction alike, so often extolled. His idealism, therefore, can be seen to have been ultimately and ironically overwhelmed by an even stronger attraction, fatal to that idealism, an attraction to liberalism, to modernism, and to the very empiricist and progressivist ethic which one part of his mind seemed to realize represented the inevitable means to success in the twentieth century. Ironically, then, the United States, for De Mille an essentially evil empire of intellectual radicalism and moral decadence, for Machar a materialistic society that yet could be returned to the idealist and imperialist Anglo-Saxon fold, for Barr finally was, its moral blemishes and spiritual weaknesses and his own frequent equivocation notwithstanding, the nation of the future, a land of opportunity and promise which inevitably all nations and empires must emulate.

Thus Barr, like Machar and De Mille before him, also failed to reconcile completely and satisfactorily the complex and contradictory intellectual and ideological tensions of the age. To say that the fiction of all three finally failed in its specific object, however, is not to say that their fiction is failed fiction, a fiction now best forgotten. Indeed, even in the very lack of success which the work of all three writers reveals, we are shown, not the timid, superficial evasion of reality that for too long has been assumed to be the mark of Victorian Canadian fiction, but rather the honest, serious, and close--the real and realistic--intellectual engagement in the Canada of the period. Their fiction shows, in other words, a determination, sometimes conscious, sometimes not, to present us with a true reflection of the intellectual heritage from which has evolved, and upon which rests, our own age's literary and intellectual, social and political, uncertainty and questioning. And in the attempt, however unsuccessful we must judge it to have been, to discover a common intellectual ground between the poles or modes of thought which seem intellectually to define us as a nation, they perhaps also suggest to us a way to answer, or to respond to, the uncertainty and questioning that yet bedevils and characterizes us.

CHAPTER TWO

JAMES DE MILLE:
CONVICTION AND THE COPPER CYLINDER

James De Mille's remarkable A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder is a novel that, for too long, has awaited the full critical attention that it deserves. Published posthumously in 1888 but written possibly as many as three decades earlier, A Strange Manuscript is a novel of ideas which, although it demands to be considered within its mid-century political, social, and intellectual context, has not adequately received such a consideration.

The work is a frame novel of sorts. Its primary narrative is the story of Adam More, a sailor who becomes cut off and lost from his crew in the south polar reaches and happens upon a region and civilization that is at once a grotesque distortion and the inverse of the Western Christian world and civilization. The region is inhabited both by prehistoric creatures and by a peculiar people who crave darkness over light, whose language is vaguely Hebraic, and whose religion and cultural mores, also vaguely Judaic, are premised on the apparently ascetic and altruistic valuing of poverty over wealth, selflessness over selfishness, and death over life. On the surface this world may seem to have some distinctly utopian qualities; however, as some of its more bizarre features--its penchant for darkness and death, for example--may already begin to suggest, the civilization is fundamentally a dystopia, a dystopia, moreover, which quickly begins to reveal De Mille's satiric purpose. The novel's satire, directed against early- and mid-Victorian scientific, social, cultural, political, and, especially, religious values, beliefs and ideas, becomes even more apparent when one considers the novel's frame. Adam More's story, that is, the strange manuscript of the novel's title, which More has placed in a copper cylinder and set upon the seas for someone to discover, is framed by, and periodically interpolated with, commentary from the manuscript's discoverers, four indolent gentlemen, Victorian dilettantes, in effect, who are on a yacht trip designed to relieve them of their boredom. Upon their discovery of the manuscript, these four quickly form a kind of *ad hoc* "symposium of 'experts'" (Kilian 61),[1] bringing a pedantic understanding of their age's scientific, cultural, and religious knowledge and beliefs to the periodic discussion of their find. The two narratives of De Mille's satire, consequently, work together as a kind of extended dialogue, a dialectical interchange, between, on the one hand, a superficially civilized but fundamentally primitive fictional people whose beliefs, ideas and values, however bizarre, are satiric barbed thrusts aimed squarely at the Victorian real world; and, on the other hand, a number of real or realistic and selectively representative members of that society being satirized who react to and, whether they realize it or not, respond to the satiric charges of the first narrative.

A Strange Manuscript, then, reveals remarkable potential for study and analysis within the context of Victorian thought, yet such potential notwithstanding, little has been done with the work. In spite of a number of recent critical commentaries that begin to suggest that some reestimation may be at hand, the novel has at best secured a place only in a minor canon of nineteenth-century Canadian curiosities. Criticism of the novel seems confused about, and unable to agree upon, De Mille's primary intention in writing the novel. While admittedly it invites some diverse speculation, recent approaches to, and interpretations of, the novel are remarkably wide-ranging. For example, George Woodcock concludes that it is an earnestly satiric exposure of "Victorian anti-vitalism" ("De Mille" 178), while Wayne R. Kime concludes that the novel is a light-hearted "extended professorial play, a learned amusement" ("American Antecedents" 302). Indeed, the latter interpretation, which sees De Mille concocting a "pastiche" that is "frankly derivative" of works by Poe, Melville, and W. H. Prescott, reveals another aspect of critical approaches to the novel:

the search for what are supposed to be A Strange Manuscript's antecedents and sources. Fred Cogswell, for example, names Jules Verne and Rider Haggard as sources; Woodcock names Samuel Butler, Lord Bulwer-Lytton, and W. H. Mallock; yet others have named Plato, Jonathan Swift, Thomas More, Wilkie Collins, Charles Read, Eugene Sue, Edward Bellamy, and others.[2] While not illegitimate given the admittedly allusive and enigmatic nature of this novel, the obsessive search for the novel's antecedents and sources has both compounded the problem of discovering authorial purpose and tended to reinforce the nagging assumption that the novel is an inferior imitation of better-known works. But perhaps most significantly, such a wide-ranging search has tended to deflect criticism away from the one approach to the novel--an examination of it within its historical and intellectual context--that might best serve this remarkable novel of ideas. Not only might such an approach serve our attempt to discover De Mille's overriding intention in the writing of the novel, but more significantly insofar as De Mille's place and importance within Canadian literature are concerned, such a study might serve to reveal in De Mille a distinctive yet typical Canadian frame of mind and thought.

That A Strange Manuscript is intended as a criticism of elements of Victorian society, of course, cannot be and has not been disputed. For example, Woodcock's criticism of the novel maintains that De Mille takes direct aim at Victorian anti-vitalism, at the death wish latent in a good many aspects of Victorian religious and cultural life. And, no doubt, Woodcock's thesis seems a reasonable interpretation of a good number of the more bizarre elements of the Kosekin, the lost race which Adam More discovers at the South Pole. What typifies the Kosekin most, of course--and this element readily fits Woodcock's thesis--is their love of darkness. Adam More first comes upon this people in the region's sixth-months period of sunlight. Since they are essentially in the midst of their "nocturnal" period, the Kosekin are quite subdued and More's initial impression of them, their squinting in the sunlight and their craving after the darkness of their caves excepted, is that they are an extraordinary people only in the degree to which they are passive and friendly. "Here all on the surface was pleasant and beautiful," More notes some time later; "all the people were amiable and courteous and most generous" upon his first arrival, he adds, greeting him with "cordial affection" and ready to respond to his "slightest wish" (118). Yet as the Kosekin dark season approaches, there are signs that this surface civility harbours, by normal human standards, some very uncivil longings. Accompanying a number of Kosekin on a hunt of one of the saurian creatures off the shores of the Kosekin coastal city, More to his horror witnesses the willingness--indeed, the desire--of the essentially unarmed Kosekin to risk and even to offer their lives in the venture. After the massive slaughter of Kosekin that occurs, he is even more horrified to learn that the Kosekin, who do not mourn their loss but rather celebrate it, crave such death and consider dying in such fashion the ultimate honour and reward of life. The latent and morbidly masochistic and suicidal tendencies which linger beneath the Kosekin surface (the Kosekin consider actual suicide dishonourable, cowardly, and selfish) become clear in all their cultural and religious manifestations when, upon the official start of the dark season, More is permitted to witness the feast of the "Mista Kosek." In the first part of this semi-annual rite, which takes place at a huge stone ceremonial pyramid, the frenzied crowd of Kosekin chant blessings as a number of apparently honoured youths rush up the steps of the pyramid to the altar on top where they vie to be among the first to be sacrificially hurled to their deaths below. The second part of the feast, which takes place the following day, is literally a feast: the previous day's victims receive the additional honour of being dined upon by living Kosekin at a large communal banquet.

In spite of its surface civility, therefore, the true Kosekin nature is characterized by primitive longing for darkness, death, and, moreover, even by cannibalistic urges, and while, as Woodcock says, "at first sight this mad and masochistic world seems to be the absurd opposite of our own," De Mille has in mind the intention of "isolat[ing] and expos[ing] self-destructive elements in his own society" ("De Mille" 178). A number of things in the novel seem to point to this authorial intention. Although the members of the symposium of Victorian gentlemen who discover More's strange manuscript speculate widely about who the Kosekin are and where they originate, they arrive at general agreement that the heritage of this people is at least Judaic if not Judeo-Christian. That this is indeed De Mille's intention and not just the erroneous or idle speculation of the foursome of the symposium, who are, after all, only fictional and potentially unreliable characters themselves, seems to be confirmed by the language De Mille gives the Kosekin. That language is basically Hebrew, and, as R. E. Watters points out, De Mille, who "was an accomplished linguist, . . . knew precisely what he was doing" (xiiin5). And to bring the origin of the Kosekin even closer to the author's own world, De Mille periodically forces More to confront the disturbing possibility that the Kosekin have more in common with More's own people and world than he may think. To his surprise, for example, More discovers that when he plays a violin and sings for the benefit of the Kosekin, the melodies "which these people like best [are] Irish and Scottish" ones. Ironically, More discovers this attraction during the gruesome cannibalistic feast of Mista Kosek; so, after concluding that the reason they respond so favourably to such music is that "in their mild manners and their outbursts of cruelty they seemed . . . not to be unlike the very race which had created this music, since the Celt is at once gentle and blood-thirsty" (108), More vows never to perform before them again. Perhaps more serious and substantial in making the same kind of satiric connection between the Kosekin and De Mille's own society and world, however, are frequent discussions and debates between More and his Kosekin hosts over the merits and deficiencies of their respective worlds. Once again More is frequently shocked to see similarities between the two worlds that he had not thought were present. When, for instance, More self-righteously confronts his host with what to More's mind is the unconscionable waste of human life in the way the Kosekin hunt the fiercesome reptilian monsters of the region or in the way they conduct war (which is done with the same disregard for life and craving for death as is the hunt), More is left unable to respond to the following charge by his host:

> Have you not told me incredible things about your people, among which there were a few that seemed natural and intelligible [that is, from the Kosekin point of view]? Among these was your system of honoring above all men those who procure the death of the largest number. You, with your pretended fear of death, wish to meet battle as eagerly as we do, and your most renowned men are those who have sent most to death. (157)

"Look at the Kosekin and wonder," Woodcock rightly suggests that De Mille is telling his Victorian contemporaries, "for here are your own beliefs put into literal action." Citing Swinburne as another Victorian who "denounced at this very period the death worship that was implicit in conventional Christianity," Woodcock maintains that De Mille is one of a number of "nineteenth-century men [able to] appreciate the anti-vitalism implied in Victorian attitude, and rooted partly in Calvinist religion with its morbid fatalism and partly in the more negative aspects of romanticism" ("De Mille" 178).[3] Woodcock's contention that conventional Christianity and specifically Calvinism is both the major source for, and the object of, De Mille's fictional civilization and his satire is difficult to deny. As Woodcock says, it is as if De Mille has taken the "tenets of conventional Christianity," taken in particular Victorian piety and prudery, then separated these tenets from the "evasions which formed the modus vivendi between belief and action" in Victorian life, and finally proceeded to put these tenets into literal effect. What we see in the Kosekin, then, are a people who, for example, in their cherishing of "unfulfilled love" and their disapproval of married love (marriage for them has value only for purposes of propagation), actually live out "Victorian sexual morality and marriage customs"; a people who, in taking the "cult of poverty" to its most "extreme physical forms," actually live out the "intellectual and emotional impoverishment" that, says Woodcock, Victorian religion encouraged; a people who, in short, actually live out a devotion to "the imitation of Christ and his saints," and to the "following [of] an ascentic [sic] path of poverty and self-denial, ultimately welcoming martyrdom."[4] Indeed, so certain is Woodcock of De Mille's anti-Christian satiric intent that he goes so far as to suggest that Kosekin cannibalism points out the primitivism inherent in Christianity and, in particular, in the commemorative partaking of Christ's body and blood. "Can ritual cannibals," asks Woodcock rhetorically, "regard themselves as superior to literal cannibals? . . . Can those whose religion is based on the sacrifice and death of their own redeemer, who see true life beginning with the end of what life they now enjoy, be regarded as anything else than devotees of death?" ("De Mille" 178). And, certainly, Woodcock's interpretation is a legitimate one in many respects. It can be noted, for example, as M. G. Parks has observed, "that the idea of having the Kosekin perform cannibalistic rites comes from De Mille's knowledge of ancient history--the superstitious belief current among first-century Romans that the Christians in their midst practised cannibalism at their services" ("Strange" 77n12). Parks provides the following passage from De Mille's historical novel Helena's Household (1867) in support of his contention. Roman Christians, De Mille writes,

> met in secret assemblies, where it was reported that they indulged in the worst vices among themselves. The mysterious repast which they celebrated in memory of their dying Lord, was particularly suspected. A report prevailed that at this repast they fed on human flesh, and drank human blood;--a strange perversion of the symbolical rite, which represented by bread and wine the body and blood of the Saviour. (Helena's Household 260)

The likelihood that De Mille intends the connection between Kosekin cannibalism and the Christian Eucharist notwithstanding, however, Woodcock's interpretation of A Strange Manuscript is nevertheless an extreme one, if not in pointing out the sources of the Kosekin civilization, at least in suggesting the civilization's and the novel's satiric point. De Mille most certainly is satirically contemptuous of conventionally pious Christian mores and attitudes, of morbid customs and fatalistic beliefs, but he is so, not, as Woodcock seems to imply is the case, because he is sceptical of Christian faith; he is so, as shortly we shall see, because those conventional Christian mores and attitudes, customs and beliefs have lost their raison d'etre, have lost their basis in a secure Christian faith, and as a result have become spiritually hollow and morally grotesque. However much, therefore, the novel may seem to invite us to see its author as unsympathetic and even sceptical of Christianity, we must proceed with caution, as consideration of the novel and its author within the Victorian context affirms.[5]

What has perhaps led some on a scent of religious scepticism in De Mille's writing is a passing comment made about De Mille by a former student of the author, Herbert C. Creed, in a letter collected by Archibald MacMechan, De Mille's intended biographer. The comment in the letter, quoted in a 1955 article by Arthur Bevan which attempts to bring to light some of the material MacMechan had collected for his never-completed biography of De Mille, has since found its way into a number of critical commentaries on A Strange Manuscript. In the letter, Creed, a former Classics student of De Mille at Acadia College in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, reflects:

> In private intercourse--and I frequently spent pleasant evenings at his home in Wolfville--[De Mille] was always genial and agreeable. In his conversation there was usually a tinge of the satirical. While he was doubtless a sincere Christian, and occasionally occupied the pulpit very acceptably, he took delight in ridiculing everything like cant, and even the ordinary words and actions of the 'pious' sort of people often brought to his keen eye and thin curling lip that peculiar sarcastic smile of his. (qtd in Bevan 205)

De Mille's apparent predisposition towards satiric ridicule of pietistic cant is, of course, entirely consistent with his satire of the cant-ridden, superficially pious Kosekin in A Strange Manuscript. However, such a predisposition need not necessarily suggest a complete rejection of Christianity on De Mille's part. Moreover, there is very little biographical and contextual evidence to suggest so complete a rejection of orthodox Christianity as some have suggested.

Born in 1833 to a prominent St John, New Brunswick Loyalist family, De Mille was raised in a "dominant atmosphere of evangelical Christianity and strict morality" (Parks, "Strange" 67). His father, Nathan Smith Demill,[6] was a man, according to Archibald MacMechan, of "unbending Puritanism." A successful merchant and shipowner and a staunch, prominent Baptist, Nathan Demill, or "Cold Water Demill" as he was known, was an abstinence man "at a time when total abstinence," says MacMechan, "was regarded as a mild form of lunacy" (405). Nathan Demill served as a governor of Acadia College for many years, not so much, it seems, out of his admiration for intellectual pursuits but rather out of support for both religious education and that college's strict religious character. In fact, Nathan Demill appears to have been something of an anti-intellectual; according to MacMechan, "he seems to have disparaged book-learning" and the story is told of his having "burned a package of novels that had found their way into a cargo" on one of his ships (405). Consistent with his upbringing, James De Mille was sent to three Baptist institutions to be educated: Horton Academy in 1848, Acadia College in 1849, and Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1852.

Clearly, De Mille would not have had to look far to find examples of the rigourous piety and dour otherworldliness that would characterize the fictional world of A Strange Manuscript. Yet in spite of the strict Puritanism of his upbringing and early life, De Mille never effected the kind of radical break from his father's faith that one might expect from one who would later seem to scorn Christian faith. He seems never, for example, to have become disaffected from his father, and, indeed, after graduating from Brown with an M.A. in 1854 he returned to New Brunswick to assist his father's ailing business interests and, later, to accept the Chair of Classics at Acadia College.

It is true, of course, as Parks notes, that during his years at Brown De Mille "seems to have been marked by no particular religious zeal" but was involved in the more "secular pursuits of public-speaking and debating, and in the production of comic verse" ("Strange" 68), unlike his brother Elisha Budd Demill (with whom James De Mille all his life remained very close), who entered into the Baptist ministry. It is true also that De Mille, in spite of accepting the Acadia appointment (or perhaps because of it, since Acadia in theory, if not in practice, was by 1860 free of religious or sectarian control), "approved publicly of non-sectarian education" (Parks, "Strange" 68). Most significant and true, too, are two decisions which De Mille made in 1865, the year after his father's death: De Mille that year left the denomination, if not the faith, of his father when he reverted to the Anglicanism of his forefathers (his father having become Baptist, when James was nine, for reasons likely involving the former's "militant crusade against the demon rum" [Parks, "Strange" 67]); in that year also De Mille left the security of his Acadia College appointment for an appointment in History and Rhetoric at the newly reestablished and non-sectarian Dalhousie College.

Other than the Creed comment and such scattered bits of evidence as exist in the author's scant biographical record, however, "one can find few signs," as Parks says, "of the cast of mind" which would have led De Mille to an "opposition to sectarian Protestantism" ("Strange" 68), let alone to an opposition to, or a rejection of, Christianity altogether. Basing his argument mostly upon a thorough examination of Helena's Household, De Mille's historical novel that recounts early Christian church history, the most that Parks can conclude is that De Mille's religious emphasis "is not . . . on the depravity of man but on the boon of divine love." As for De Mille's conversion to Anglicanism, that, according to Parks, appears to have been less the result of any particular theological or doctrinal difficulty that the writer had with evangelical Christianity than of "what is known of his interests and attitudes--his love of classical learning, his scholarly interest in the early history of Christianity, his distaste for outward shows of evangelical piety, . . . his unswerving support for humanistic education . . . and his opposition to denominational education . . . [, and] his faith in tradition" ("Strange" 70).

Further support for the argument that De Mille's orthodoxy of belief remained intact is provided by his one major poetic endeavour yet extant, Behind the Veil,[7] a work which, coincidentally, also requires us to qualify what may seem to be, according to A Strange Manuscript, De Mille's anti-romanticism. That De Mille attempted (unsuccessfully, is the critical consensus) a theodicy or an ode on immortality in the romantic or transcendentalist traditions at all suggests that some qualification is in order. As Patricia Monk says, "it is hard to reconcile. . . . the sharp-eyed, sharp-tongued social critic who wrote the Strange Manuscript . . . with the religious mystic whose vision is recorded in Behind the Veil" (52). Hard indeed, assuming, of course, an eye and a tongue as sharp as

Woodcock and others believe is the case. As Monk herself begins to suggest about the poem, however, the apparent mysticism of the work is mostly that--apparent. A closer reading of the poem and a comparison of it to others of its kind reveals, in Monk's words, "De Mille's orthodox, conscious understanding of religion as opposed to [the] . . . natural religiousness" that distinguishes the work of the truer Romantics (50). Moreover, Monk notes that, "in a poem whose cosmology is clearly designed to represent, as a tribute to the Creator, an astronomically accurate picture of the size and magnificence of the universe, almost all De Mille's warmth of feeling is apparently reserved for the vision of earth itself and for the mortal bodies that inhabit it" (51). While in some respects he may be willing, De Mille, it seems, is temperamentally unable to go the romantic distance. As Monk says, by temperament he is not Romantic but Victorian (40). Indeed, one might conclude that his temperament, with its distinctly neo-classical cast, is pre-Victorian, Eighteenth-Century, or Renaissance, perhaps: as Bevan says (and Monk's reading of the poem would not seem to dispute it), Behind the Veil sees De Mille "resorting" in his cosmology "to the hoary concept the Great Chain of Being to justify God's ways to suffering mankind" (213). The Romantic guise of the poem notwithstanding, the mind revealed is the same as that which, for example, prompted the author's move to Anglicanism. The mind revealed is fundamentally a Tory mind, dedicated to the preservation and transmission of those cultural and spiritual values developed through the course of Western civilized history, in Hellenism, Hebraism, and Christianity, and epitomized in the English tradition. As Parks writes of De Mille's conception of Anglicanism, incidentally establishing a connection with an earlier Maritime Tory (who, like De Mille, has also been too much regarded as a Canadian Victorian curiosity or anomaly), it is a conception that

> saw [the Anglican Church] as an indigenous entity as venerable as the Roman and Greek establishments, not as a Protestant schism from Catholicism dating from the Reformation of the sixteenth century. In other words, De Mille agrees on this point with that earlier staunch Anglican, T. C. Haliburton, who had seen the reformation in England as reactionary rather than revolutionary, the English church as regaining the purity of doctrine which had long been sullied by Roman domination, and the Anglicanism that emerged from the purging away of long-established Roman heresy and corruption as the best and truest form of Christianity. What is more to the point, De Mille . . . aligned himself with the theological and ethical climate of the Anglican via media, [and] with the tradition of Hooker. ("Strange" 70-1)

But what then is the purpose of A Strange Manuscript, if it is not the rejection of otherworldly theism in either its romantic or orthodox Christian form? This much at least seems certain: given so many indications of De Mille's conservatism and orthodoxy, the apparent intellectual liberalism and heterodoxy of the novel seems unlikely to be De Mille's own. This does not mean, however, that such liberalism and heterodoxy is not at issue in the work. Indeed, both the contentious nature of such liberal and heterodox ideas and the likelihood of their being in some way at issue in so topical a novel of ideas as De Mille's work seems to be is strongly suggested by recent investigation of the intellectual climate of English Canada in the Victorian period, investigation which increasingly is revealing to us the period's full intellectual turbulence.

As intellectual historians describe it, the Victorian age in English Canada, no less than in great Britain and elsewhere, was an age in transition--from the certainty, the conviction, and the intellectual stability of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to the insecurity, the doubt, and what to many was the intellectual anarchy, of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In A Disciplined Intelligence, intellectual historian A. B. McKillop has shown that not only Canadian intellectuals but Canadians of diverse vocations, classes, and backgrounds, were, as the age wore on, increasingly on the defensive in their attempts to preserve "the continuity of . . . inherited cultural" beliefs, convictions and ideas from the threat of the "unrestricted 'intellectual' inquiry" manifest, for example, in Utilitarianism, in the newly emerging sciences, in Darwinian theory, and manifest generally in the apparently incessant flow of radical ideas, primarily from Great Britain, but from continental Europe and the United States as well (5). The particular sources for the progressive Canadian restiveness and insecurity were thus potentially myriad but the ultimate source of such spiritual and intellectual discomfort, according to the common mind certainly, and according to the academic or intellectual mind more often than not, was the same: God was being denied his rightful place in the world--more precisely, God was being denied his very existence. "All the old certainty has vanished" ("Apology" 35), Stephen Leacock was to conclude near the close of the Victorian period in Canada, and he meant, of course, certainty of political, cultural and social values as well as of spiritual or religious values. Leacock's troubled pronouncement differs more in tone than in substance from that more famous, more confident and in some ways more-to-the-point proclamation by Nietzsche, "Gott ist tot" (Gay Science 107),[8] that has come to symbolize, not so much the death of the old age, but the birth of the new. More to the point in terms of mid-Victorian Canada is a declamation like that of the Methodist preacher Stanley Burwash. Declared Burwash from his pulpit in the late 1850s:

> There are some who seem to think that the study of Nature can ennoble & cultivate the mind apart from its connection with its great Author. But take a God out of Nature and science is dead [,] her beauty is gone & the soul cramped & confined in every effort at an upward flight. (qtd in McKillop Disciplined Intelligence 89)

Indeed, however their complaints were put, whatever the degree of piety or of plain-speaking, of bravado or of cynicism, that they showed, Victorian Anglo-Canadians almost invariably shared a common concern about the prevailing intellectual climate of the time: "theirs was a moral imagination," says McKillop, "their concern for preserving cultural tradition a moral imperative that has long been central to the Anglo-Canadian frame of mind" (Disciplined Intelligence 3).

As we have seen, to show that God is dead is not likely to be the purpose of De Mille's A Strange Manuscript; however, to show that God is alive and well and is seen to be directing providentially the affairs of men seems not to be the novel's purpose either. In fact, that God is no longer seen or believed to be providing man with certainty, meaning and direction is precisely the novel's point. The satiric thrust of the novel is directed precisely against those whom Burwash and others of the age directed their declamations: those who, whether unwittingly or not, have denied God his place, even his very existence, in creation;

those whose lives, however pious they may yet seem to be, are spiritually and morally adrift. De Mille's novel, indeed, is confirmation of the widespread Victorian concern that, as Ramsay Cook phrases it, "a God banished from Nature could hardly expect to remain a bulwark of the social order" (12).

For the Kosekin, however singularly pious a people they may seem to be, are more significantly an essentially godless people. For all their rites, for all their cant, for all their principled altruistic piety, the Kosekin worship no god, at least not one that is ever identified as a deity. Their chant at the bloody rite of the Mista Kosek, "Sacrifice the victims! Rejoice! Give thanks to darkness!" (106), is about as clear an identification of what the Kosekin worship as the novel provides. And More's observations about his hosts' religion do little to help us. "As to the religion of the Kosekin," concludes More in frustration,

> I could make nothing of it. They believe that after death they go to what they call the world of darkness. The death that they long for leads to the darkness that they love; and the death and the darkness are eternal. Still, they persist in saying that the death and the darkness together form a state of bliss. They are eloquent about the happiness that awaits them there in the sunless land--the world of darkness; but, for my part, it always seemed to me a state of nothingness. (142)

From a religious conception (or non-conception) such as this which More describes, it should not be long to the conclusion that De Mille's intention is to show that, as Crawford Kilian has observed, "in a godless, absurd world, nobility is as meaningless as everything else"; and, conversely, that "nobility is attainable only in a meaningful, Christian universe." Adds Kilian:

> The land of the Kosekin is a Heaven without a God, a Heaven in which Christian principles are upheld but Christ is not. Cut off from their source, such principles turn into grotesque perversions, mockeries of themselves such as the Kosekin's cannibalistic Eucharist. Heaven, in other words, becomes Hell, but without Hell's permanence; the land of the Kosekin is a . . . realm swinging endlessly between light and darkness, until good and evil become meaningless terms. (66)

Moreover, not only does De Mille use the Kosekin and their endless swinging between darkness and light to point out the meaninglessness of each extreme without God, he also uses his protagonist, More, to that end. We might think that More, man of light that he is and simple Christian that he periodically professes himself to be, comes to the Kosekin realm bearing the light of Christian revelation. The strength of More's Christian faith would seem to be borne out, for example, by an incident that just precedes his discovery of the Kosekin inner world. More and Agnew, his crewmate, cut off from their ship and wandering about the barren antarctic wastes of what only later More discovers is the periphery of the Kosekin civilization, encounter the remains of a dead sailor. In an act which seems sincerely pious, More and his friend perform the rite of Christian burial for the dead man. However, it quickly and increasingly becomes evident that More's Christianity is only, as Kilian rightly describes it, "the thinnest of veneers" (66). Indeed, More and Agnew's attitude at the burial bears an uncanny resemblance to the attitude of the selfishly selfless Kosekin whom More is later destined to meet. "More, old fellow," says Agnew, "I feel the better for this; the service had done me good." "And me too" (23), agrees More, apparently heedless of what symbolically they may have done to ease the state of their dead brother's soul. Both mean, of course, that they feel better about their own perilous predicament and about "the hope full of immortality," as Agnew puts it, of which the burial should remind them. Yet that, too, is very shortly undermined when, within minutes, whatever immortal hope More may have had is replaced by the state of mind from which More cannot find relief until he reaches the inner Kosekin world--"despair" (a word De Mille uses in its original force and repeatedly, eight times in the course of the two short chapters that tell this part of the tale, to describe More's state). And though circumstances are indeed grim for him, More hardly reveals a spirit buoyed by Christian consolation or mindful of Christian law when, after Agnew is killed by the strange "hags" of the region and More escapes a similar fate by casting himself adrift in a small boat upon the polar seas, he very nearly gives in to his despair--he takes up his pistol and resolves to "take [his] own life before [he] should know the worst" (43). That act, once again a foreshadowing of the spiritually suicidal Kosekin he is about to encounter, is, of course, forestalled, both by his hesitancy and by his discovery of the Kosekin inner world. Upon the discovery of that world, as Kilian also argues (66), More's Christian veneer wears very thin, indeed. We might forgive him his despair in the dire circumstances of being cast adrift and destined to near certain death in the cold and dark antarctic seas; however, we should be less forgiving of More's actions when he comes upon the hope of life and imminent rescue in the sunlit Kosekin inner world, a world warm and radiant in the full glory of its light season, a world that is, says More, a "great blaze of light--light so lately lost, and supposed to be lost forever, but now filling all the universe--bright, brilliant, glowing, bringing hope and joy and gladness, with all the splendour of deep blue skies and the multitudinous laughter of ocean waves that danced and sparkled in the sun." "Falling on [his] knees," More "thank[s] the Almighty Ruler of the skies for this marvelous deliverance" (48-9).

This act seems conventionally pious until we pause to consider the precise nature of the supposed deity he prays to: the context alone suggests that it may not be God but rather the sun that he worships, an interpretation strongly confirmed much later on in the novel when More once again greets the sun, this time after its six-months disappearance in the Kosekin dark season: "'O Light!' I cried; 'O gleaming, golden Sunlight! O Light of Heaven--light that brings life and hope to man!' And I could have fallen on my knees and worshipped that rising sun" (267-8). More's rendering of thanks to godless light essentially is no more or less absurd or meaningful than the Kosekin's rendering of thanks to godless darkness.

In the novel, then, those who live in light differ only superficially from those who live in darkness. This point is made clear when, midway through the book, More leaves his original Kosekin hosts to meet and stay with a Kosekin man of light, the "Kohen Gadol." Having as a Kosekin child been shipwrecked and then rescued and taken to be raised in an unidentified but presumably Western nation outside the Kosekin world, the Kohen Gadol has returned as an adult to his native land and has become one whom, says More, "we [would] term 'a man of advanced views,' or perhaps a 'Reformer,' or a 'Philosophical Radical'" (169). Having "sunk to [a] position . . . [of] more wealth, power, and display than any other man in the nation" (166), the Kohen

Gadol has dedicated his life to effecting in the region a plainly materialistic "revolution in politics and morals" (169). Not surprisingly, given the fickleness and lack of Christian integrity he has shown earlier, More immediately befriends this kindred spirit, and, in the wonderfully ironic scene which follows, a scene which shreds whatever vestiges of Christian piety or nobility More may have seemed yet to retain, the two sit down to a frank and animated discussion of their mutual values, beliefs, and ideas. The Kohen Gadol, the "shrewdness and cunning" of whose face had immediately made More "glad," delights the visitor with his political ideology, one which "advocated selfishness as the true law of life, without which no state can prosper" (169); and More, for his part, holds the Kohen Gadol spell-bound as he tells his host of his world far away, where

> self was the chief consideration, self-preservation the law of nature; death the King of Terrors; wealth the object of universal search, poverty the worst of evils; unrequited love nothing less than anguish and despair; to command others the highest glory; victory, honor; defeat, intolerable shame; and other things of the sort. (170)

The materialistic self-centredness and the godlessness of the More's worldliness here equally stand revealed in full ironic glory, and More's godlessness is of little more sense than the Kosekin otherworldliness. Though the two views in one way remain direct opposites, in a more significant way they are extremes which meet in common senselessness. As a member of the symposium reading the manuscript says, More's strange tale

> mocks us by exhibiting a new race of men, animated by passions and impulses which are directly the opposite of ours, and yet no nearer happiness than we are. It shows a world where our evil is made a good, and good an evil; there all that we consider a blessing is had in abundance--prolonged and perpetual sunlight, riches, power, fame--and yet these things are despised, and the people, turning away from them, imagine that they can find happiness in poverty, darkness, death, and unrequited love. The writer thus mocks at all our dearest passions and strongest desires; and his general aim is to show that the mere search for happiness *per se* is a vulgar thing, and must always result in utter nothingness. (226-7)

De Mille's satire--hardly simple satire--thus spans the continuum of ideology and belief to discover the godlessness inherent in the extremes, of pietistic otherworldliness and materialistic worldliness, at either end. Yet in need of fuller exploration, however, is consideration of the novel as a satiric comment on the godlessness evident in the religious, cultural, social, and political ideologies that De Mille saw around him, in his own age and in his own context. Criticism of the novel to date, while rightly and inevitably pointing out Victorian pietism and even Maritime Victorian Canadian evangelicalism as both the source and subject of the novel's satire, nevertheless has tended to emphasize the more universal nature and quality of the novel's religious or spiritual satire. While of course it would be wrong-headed and, doubtless, antithetical to the idea of criticism, to deny A Strange Manuscript its universal quality and power, surely it is from the particularity of De Mille's understanding, perception, and vision of life that a large measure of the work's universality is derived.

Even the closest contextual commentary on the novel, Parks' remarkably fine analysis of De Mille and of the novel's religiosity, "Strange to Strangers Only," which sees the novelist fictionally developing his interest in Hebraism, Hellenism, and Anglicanism, has tended to emphasize the extent to which the writer and his work are backward-looking. The Kosekin, then, are explained, not primarily in terms of what De Mille saw around him and, perhaps more importantly, what he saw before him, but rather mostly in terms of what he saw behind him, in the historical development of Western civilization, Christianity, and, particularly, Anglicanism. Given this emphasis, the Kosekin, even though they point a satirically accusing finger at Western culture and civilization, and, moreover, even though they can "be seen as pushing to logical conclusions extreme religious and moral tendencies in Western religion," are a prehistoric people or, perhaps rather, a people whom the course of Western human history has passed by. "Untempered as they [therefore] have been by Hellenism or Christianity," says Parks, "they have even reached the utter absurdity of upholding other-worldly fanaticism without any raison d'etre" (72). Parks' conclusion is certainly true. However, like Canadian Tories both before and after him, De Mille, as already we have begun to see, also takes his cue from alarming tendencies all about him, tendencies which in one sense are logical extensions of earlier ones, but tendencies which, paradoxically, in another and just as important sense originate in De Mille's own day and threaten to deprive the future of the benefit of the past.

Perhaps the most interesting way in which A Strange Manuscript reveals how closely the novel comes to identifying or representing aspects peculiar to, and arising out of, North American mid-Victorian life is in the intriguing extent to which the novel permits allegorical reading. Crawford Kilian is the first to have hinted at the novel's potential in this regard. Responding to his own question, "how specific are De Mille's [satiric] targets?," Kilian writes:

> Although More and symposium are English, it seems fairly clear that North America, and especially Canada, are singled out as most deserving comparison with the Kosekin. More enters his Antarctic heaven in Chapter VI, which is

> entitled "The New World." The Kosekin spend half the year indoors, a life-style similar to the Canadian stereotype. The channel down which More and Agnew are carried seems physically similar to the Gulf of St. Lawrence; this suggests that the Kosekin elite who dwell on the outer coast are analogous to Canadian Maritimers. In one respect, the Kosekin seem like characters out of Ralph Connor or Edward William Thomson: they are profoundly moved by the Scotch and Irish songs that More plays on his violin. (65)

After having established this initial potential for allegorical interpretation, however, Kilian quickly moves on to other aspects of the novel, claiming, rightly to some extent, that "De Mille's satire is ultimately aimed not at a particular class or nationality but at a philosophical attitude" (66).

Yet such allegorical reading should not be dismissed too lightly. The correspondence between the Kosekin outer region and the Maritime and St. Lawrence regions, for example, is very likely true. Indeed, as MacMechan points out, De Mille had travelled these regions in 1850--the year, incidentally, in which the novel is set and perhaps as little as five years before he began writing A Strange Manuscript--in preparation for the tour of continental Europe that, as MacMechan says, "exercised the most important influence upon his whole life." "It would be hard to over-estimate the influence," says MacMechan, which the eighteen-month hiatus from his studies at Brown "exerted upon the whole of De Mille's subsequent career." He adds:

> For a talented boy, in the most impressionable period of his life, to come into direct contact with the old-world civilisation was in itself a liberal education. The effect of this tour in broadening his mind and stimulating his inventive faculty cannot be calculated; for at this time he probably received his first impulse to write. (46)

MacMechan goes on to describe how much De Mille's fictional work, from *Helena's Household* to the *The Dodge Club* and the subsequent Dodge Club Series of books for boys, owes to experiences gathered during the two-year adventure. Yet that adventure began at home and, as MacMechan also shows, De Mille collected a good many impressions and experiences in the trip that took him from St. John, south by steamer to Portland, Maine and to Boston; then north by rail and stage-coach to Burlington, Vermont; then west by steamer and ferry to Montreal; then east through the St. Lawrence to the city of Quebec, where, boarding one of his father's ships, he travelled the remainder of the St. Lawrence en route to England and the continent. Not only did the voyage through the seaway and gulf impress him but, like many Loyalists of the era, he was keenly interested in making comparisons between the cities, towns, and people of Canada and those of the United States, mostly to the former's advantage. Indeed, even a work like De Mille's popular and highly successful *The Dodge Club, or Italy in 1859* (written in 1861, published serially in *Harper's* in the mid-1860s, and published in book-form in 1869), which owes much to the author's experiences in Italy, likely owes nearly as much to impressions gathered in his travels through the United States in early stages of the journey (and collected also, one would suspect, in his first year at Brown). Although the novel is set in France and Italy, it is about a group of Americans and, in particular, an outspoken Senator Jones from Massachusetts, a "real live Yankee" in the comic-picaresque tradition of Haliburton's Sam Slick and Twain's Connecticut Yankee, who comes bearing ideas of progress and liberty to the benighted Europeans.

That the channel through which More and Agnew, and later More alone, pass represents the St. Lawrence Gulf and River and, more significantly, that the Kosekin outer region that More and Agnew first encounter represents the Canadian Maritime region, seem to be confirmed by a careful reading of the passages describing More's travel through these parts. Indeed, as one reads the passage describing More's travel through the Kosekin outer region, a passage which, as Woodcock suggests, probably shows De Mille writing at his best, one senses, in addition to the epic quality or "touch of authentic Odysseanism" that Woodcock says is present ("De Mille" 175), something almost Haliburtonesque in both tone and purpose: in the tradition of Haliburton and the yet earlier Maritime writer Thomas McCulloch, both of whose works are at once a satire and a celebration of their native region and people, De Mille's writing here also is both a compliment to, and a criticism of, that same region and people.

According to More, of course, the Kosekin outer region is among the most cursed of Kosekin regions, "iron-bound and dark and forbidding" (29), inhabited by the most repugnant of people, hideous cannibals, "creatures [that] seemed like human vermin" (33); but according to the Kosekin, the area is among the most highly-regarded and desired of their regions, inhabited by the most blessed and superior of their race. Inverting the Kosekin view to discover a real world equivalence, we arrive at what may be the author's perception of his native region: a region lush, light and bountiful, inhabited by a gracious and civilized people, yet a region by outsiders perceived to be (as in the novel More perceives it to be) most remote and undesirable, inhabited by the most despised and inferior of people. Yet the irony of De Mille's bizarre world is seldom simply stable and if he manages a compliment to his Maritime region and people, it is a compliment which in large measure is back-handed and critical, damning with absurd praise. The natives of the region, who are "the lowest of humanity . . . [, whose] speech was a form of mockery" (37) and who, when they are first sighted, carry spears "for fishing [among other] purposes," grovel pathetically before Agnew and More when the two first land, as if, says More (in a comment which also levels some irony at the only-superficially civilized visitors), "they regarded us as superior beings of some sort." As he stands and watches the scene before him, volcanoes in the background and aurora australis and the moon above lighting the "haggard" faces around him, it seems to More that he has "died and gone to the land of woe--an iron land, a land of despair, with lurid fires all aglow and faces of fear" (38). In spite of the initial compliment to his native region, then, also implied in this scene is the hint of an entreaty to De Mille's Maritimers to see to their lack of industry, progress and sense of self-worth.

Yet the allegorical potential of De Mille's novel does not end with those portions which tell of More's discovery of the Kosekin outer region. If the Kosekin outer region represents the Canadian Maritime region and if, as Kilian says, the channel through which More's drifting boat must pass before he encounters the Kosekin inner world (a passage which, at the outset of his travel though it, has More convinced that he is "on the brink of some tremendous cataract a thousand times deeper than Niagara" [41]) corresponds to the St. Lawrence Gulf and River, then that inner world which More finally enters must be analogous to the Great Lakes region of central Canada and the north-eastern United States. Indeed, the "basin-shaped world" which More discovers after his long passage through the channel has a large lake or calm sea at its centre, the "glassy tides" of which fall gently on the shore nearest to More. On that shore, says More,

> lay a land all green with vegetation, where cultivated fields were visible and vineyards and orchards and groves, together with forests of palm and all manner of trees of every variety of hue, which ran up the sides of the mountains till they reached the limits of vegetation and regions of snow and ice.
>
> Here in all directions there were unmistakable signs of human life--the outlines of populous cities and busy towns and hamlets; roads winding far away along the plain or up the mountain-sides, and mighty works of industry in the shape of massive structures, terraced slopes, long rows of arches, ponderous pyramids, and battlemented walls. (49)

De Mille here seems to have symbolically and allegorically in mind a Canadian north shore. This conclusion is perhaps confirmed by force of contrast when, in order to meet with the Kohen Gadol, More is taken "across the pole," across the great lake or sea which centres the region, to a city on the opposite shore. The quietly pastoral, agrarian semi-urban region described above seems all the more Canadian by force of contrast with the throbbing metropolis, "the mighty 'amir' of the Kosekin," that sits on the opposite shore:

> It looked like a city of a million inhabitants, though it may have contained far less than that. By the brilliant aurora light I could see that it was in general shape and form precisely like the city that we had left, though far larger and more

> populous. The harbour was full of ships and boats of all sorts, some lying at the stone quays, others leaving port, others entering. Galleys passed and repassed, and merchant ships with their clumsy sails, and small fishing-boats. From afar arose the deep hum of a vast multitude and the low roar that always ascends from a popular city. (163)

Though, of course, in the Kosekin scheme of things this is the most insignificant of regions or places (a clue in itself, as we shall see, to the emerging allegorical satire and an indication already of De Mille's perspective), we are here at the very heart of the Kosekin sub-continent--a Boston or a New York, we might be tempted to conclude--its industrial and mercantile centre and, of course, too, its capital.

In the middle of this capital of Kosekindom, in a "great cavern in the [city's] chief square, opposite" the city's "lofty pyramid," live both the Kohen Gadol, the Kosekin "Philosophical Radical," and his daughter, Layelah, his "Malea" or queen. The spiritual emptiness of the Kohen Gadol's radicalism we have already noted: his devotion to material happiness already shows him to be a kind of vulgarized version of Benthamite Utilitarianism, the pleasure principle writ large. In the context of the allegory that slowly emerges, however, is the even more revealing satire which, as shortly we shall see, in the

Kohen Gadol De Mille directs against the American revolutionary or republican spirit and ideology.

A second-generation Loyalist like De Mille, of course, would not have been alone in the suspicion and concern that American society was radically liberal, sordidly materialistic, and ultimately godless. In A Sense of Power, Carl Berger has shown that among the more prevalent of Anglo-Canadian attitudes towards Americans were two: first, that "Americans were a materialistic people" and, second, that American society was afflicted with a moral and social "looseness and license." In fact, observes Berger, to most Tory Canadians, American moral looseness, social decadence, and materialism were essentially one, stemming from "the absence of the cohesive power of religion," or, in slightly different terms, stemming from the "lawlessness" of the revolutionary constitutional ideal (157). "Rejecting the binding force of convention and the legacies of the past, possessing no secure anchor in human nature, lacking a sense of obligation and bereft of all principles except money-making," Berger summarizes the Canadian perception, "American society stood a living proof of the essential truth of Walter Bagehot's epigram that men cannot adopt a constitution any more than they can adopt a father" (162). As Nicholas Flood Davin posed the Canadian concern in a speech delivered in 1873 before a Toronto audience, American society is "a society in which mammon is supreme; wealth the only test of merit; without . . . love for long enduring toil tending toward glorious objects [,] . . . a society restless, undignified, unshapely, unlovely" (qtd in Berger, Sense of Power 157).

Davin's comments could well serve to describe the Kohen Gadol's radical enclave in the Kosekin world. The spirit of '76 which, so to speak, the Kohen Gadol has dedicated his life to is a fascinating one, and, as far as he must be concerned, is a lucrative one, too. He, of course, has his ideals (ten principal ones, in fact, a decalogue, in Kosekin terms, of moral, social, and political decadence), that "a man should not love others better than himself," for example; that "other things are to be preferred to death"; that "poverty is not the best state for man"; that "Paupers should be forced to take a certain amount of wealth, to relieve the necessities of the rich"; that "lovers may sometimes marry" (169-70), and so on. However refreshingly sensible--or human--these principles may strike the reader, the Kohen Gadol's avowed intention to "disseminate [these] peculiar doctrines" amounts to little more than a well-managed swindle: he believes his ideas to be "too advanced for reception by any except the chosen few" and thus

> with the multitude he had to deal differently, and had to work his way by concealing his opinions. He had made a great conspiracy, in which he was still

> engaged, and had gained immense numbers of adherents by allowing them to give him their whole wealth. Through his assistance many Athons and Kohens and Melecks [the Kosekin lower middle classes] had become artisans, laborers, and even paupers; but all were bound by him to the strictest secrecy. If any one should divulge the secret, it would be ruin to him and to many others; for they would at once be punished by the bestowal of the extremest wealth . . . and by the severest rigors of luxury, power, splendor, and magnificence known among the Kosekin. (170)

Neither the slow-witted More nor the sly-witted Kohen Gadol seems disturbed by the fact that the bestowal of wealth and luxury on the many is precisely one of the revolutionary ideals to which this crafty and self-serving democrat has dedicated himself.

Yet, as we have noted earlier, the Kohen Gadol is dedicated to a revolution in both "politics and morals" (169), and the satire that emerges from this part of the novel is not mostly a political satire but, indeed, more truly a social satire or a satire of radical social mores. From More's point of view, perhaps the most unsettling and yet stimulating radical quality or ideal that he encounters in his visit is his hosts' liberty, particularly in affairs of the heart. More has been joined in his visit to the amir by his betrothed, Almah, who, like More, is a light-loving foreigner among the Kosekin. Having fallen in love with this demure and innocent woman upon his first arrival in the

Kosekin inner world, he has pledged his undying love to her and at times, it seems, he nearly worships her. Upon his meeting Layelah, however, More finds a new attraction forming. For her part, Layelah seems initially to be above anything romantic. Like her father, Layelah periodically insists upon her status as a Kosekin "philosopher" and, moreover, unlike the orthodox Kosekin whom More has met, who have only "the slightest desire" to know about More and his world and who seem "content with the [mere] knowledge that [he] was a foreigner" (167), Layelah seems to take a keen intellectual and utilitarian interest in all that More is able to tell her. Yet through the course of their meetings More begins to sense something less-than-intellectual in her conversations with him:

> She had an insatiable thirst for knowledge, and her curiosity extended to all those great inventions which are the wonder of Christendom. Locomotives and steamboats were described to her under the names of "horses of fire" and "ships of fire"; printing was "letters of power"; the electric telegraph, "messages of lightning"; the organ, "lute of giants," and so on. Yet, in spite of the eagerness with which she made her inquiries, and the diligence with which she noted all down, I could see that there was in her mind something lying beneath it all--a far more earnest purpose, and a far more personal one, than the pursuit of useful knowledge. (175)

What more earnest and personal purpose she has, Layelah very shortly makes abundantly clear: she tells More that she loves him, she immediately proposes that they marry, and she suggests, moreover, that, if Almah is a concern, her father would be happy to marry the rival. More is completely disarmed by Layelah's proposals--"it's not fair," he complains, "it doesn't do for women to take the initiative" (179)--but he shortly betrays his own feelings on the matter (and in the process once again reveals himself to be, to use Kilian's words, the "ninny" and the "hypocrite" that elsewhere we have seen him to be) when he proposes instead that he marry both women. In the delightful ironic reversal which follows, the morally indignant Layelah scorns More's proposal as "downright bigamy" and then proceeds to put into effect her own cunning plan to secure More all to herself. When, the following morning, it becomes clear to More "that Layelah had obtained her father's co-operation in her scheme, and that the old villain actually imagined that he could win the hand of Almah," More admits to having lost his comfort in this too cozy nest of radicals: "It was very trying," he says, "and, in spite of my confidence in Almah, my jealousy was excited, and I began to think that the party of philosophical Radicals were not so agreeable as the orthodox cannibals whom I first met" (184).

Clearly much of the irony in this scene, and in the scenes of his visit to the amir generally, is at the hypocritical and dull-witted More's expense; but De Mille reserves a good deal of that irony for Layelah and the Kohen Gadol. Appropriately, the last we see of the latter is his devious and faintly lecherous attempt to help his daughter by winning Almah's affection. De Mille may not have had in mind that this philosopher cum philanderer's materialistic and hedonistic paradise be seen as a sordid and satiric variation of a Fourieresque kind of American social utopia, but in the extent to which we see idealistic libertarian rapidly transformed into unprincipled libertine we can be sure that De Mille regards with suspicion and concern the social, no less than the political, ideas satirically embodied in the Kohen Gadol.

The strength of satirically critical feeling that De Mille has for the Kohen Gadol and what he embodies and represents becomes clearer yet when he is compared with the Kohen, a character whom, given the allegorical scheme of the novel, we might term the representative Central Anglo-Canadian of the work. A citizen of the first Kosekin city which More encounters, the city across the lake or sea from the Kohen Gadol's amir, and More's host and guide through most of the novel, the Kohen is the most sympathetically drawn Kosekin in the novel. As his name or title implies, the Kohen is not far removed, socially at least, from his radical fellow Kosekin, the Kohen Gadol: both are extremely wealthy and both occupy the lowest orders of Kosekin society. The similarities, however, end there. As Parks notes, "the Kohen Gadol is seen to be much more contemptible, much less 'virtuous,' than the Kohen." The Kohen Gadol, who is "greedy and selfish," is, adds Parks, rich "by deliberate choice"; the Kohen, however, who, in Parks' words, "knows what is 'right' and tries to live up to his ideals" ("Strange" 78n23) is rich only grudgingly, in spite of, or, more precisely, because of, his idealism. Unlike the Kohen Gadol, the Kohen is an orthodox Kosekin, so exceptionally dedicated to his Kosekin ideals that he is used even by his fellow Kosekin. In order for the Kosekin to attain the altruistic and selfless heights of their social structure, they must, of course, vigorously strive to rid themselves of the curse of whatever wealth they possess and they must also be unfailing in their attempts to secure the comfort and health of others at their own expense. This vigorous social striving many Kosekin seem well able to do, quite selfishly, in fact; but what they then require to help them in their social advancement are beneficiaries of their selfish selflessness. And in this unofficial office or capacity, the Kohen, to his perpetual chagrin, is second only to the Kohen Gadol. As the Kohen tells More of his sad life and situation:

> I was born . . . . in the most enviable of positions. My father and mother were among the poorest in the land. Both died when I was a child, and I never saw

> them. I grew up in the open fields and public caverns, along with the most esteemed paupers. But unfortunately for me, there was something wanting in my natural disposition. I loved death, of course, and poverty, too, very strongly; but I did not have that eager and energetic passion which is so desirable, nor was I watchful enough over my blessed estate of poverty. Surrounded as I was by those who were only too ready to take advantage of my ignorance or want of vigilance, I soon fell into evil ways, and gradually, in spite of myself, I found wealth pouring in upon me. Designing men succeeded in winning my consent to receive their possessions. . . . I grew richer and richer. . . . I was too weak to resist; in fact, I lacked moral fibre, and had never learned to say "No." So I went on, descending lower and lower in the scale of being. I became a capitalist, an Athon, a general officer, and finally Kohen. (132-3)

Though blessed with the best of upbringings, heir to a life and to values, ideals, and traditions which are the envy of all, the Kohen is now spiritually demoralized, so much so that morally he seems to be only one short step removed from the materialistic degeneracy of a Kohen Gadol. Such, implies De Mille, is the plight of the Anglo-Canadian, caught between the claims of a moral and spiritual tradition that is an inherent part of his nature and the claims of a new order, one that, even if it is spiritually weak, is materially powerful and threatening. Ironically, however, the Kohen's saving grace, though perhaps it affords him little practical social consolation, is that, unwittingly, he has preserved the moral and spiritual idealism of his tradition, not only preserved it, but also lived it, in a way that even his forebears have not; indeed, in describing the Kohen, one might be tempted to try to make use of the expression "more British than the British," applying it, of course, not to Kohen's manners or mannerisms but rather to his essential spirit. As Parks describes the subtle irony of the Kohen's character:

> The Kohen tries to be a "good" Kosekin, but is victimized by less scrupulous people who take advantage of him. In a sense the Kohen is not unvirtuous, even by Kosekin standards, because _generosity_ causes him to accept what others offer. He is self-sacrificing, by Kosekin standards, in accepting wealth at his own spiritual expense. ("Strange" 78n23).

Moreover, the Kohen, this type of the Canadian, is, to use Parks' words, "genuinely human." That is, unlike the radical liberal Kohen Gadol at the one extreme or the orthodox aristocratic Chief Pauper at the other extreme, the Kohen, however uncomfortable may be the result, has attempted to synthesize--has, indeed, humanized--both his material and spiritual existences. It may not be the case that De Mille intends the Kohen to be, even more specifically, the type of the Victorian-Canadian imperialist, dedicated not just to preserving but also to rejuvenating the time-honoured, but also time-worn, ideals of the British tradition and Empire. Yet the Kohen certainly seems to embody the potential for such moral and spiritual renewal and his character is remarkably like that called for by imperialists of the period. Berger might well have been describing the Kohen when he describes the idealistic appeal made, for example, by the imperialists G. M. Grant and G. R. Parkin: "they called for a dedication of material things and human effort to spiritual ends and created an . . . ethic which was so intense, so insistent upon self-sacrifice, that men must have wondered whether it could ever be achieved in this world" (Sense of Power 217).

The novel's remarkable potential for allegorical interpretation, then, already begins to suggest the extent to which De Mille can be seen to be addressing some very immediate attitudes, ideas, and concerns of his age and context. This authorial intention, moreover, is confirmed by yet another aspect of A Strange Manuscript. This feature, one of particular interest in the mid-Victorian context but one which, surprisingly, until very recently[9] has not received the critical attention that one might expect, is the extent to which the novel includes within it reference to prehistoric life forms and to Victorian paleontological and geophysical discovery and speculation: not only is More's strange narrative frequently concerned with describing the saurian life that inhabits the Kosekin realm, but as well a good deal of the symposium's attention is attracted to these creatures and to the possibility that they are living proof of Victorian paleontological discovery. The prevailing critical attitude towards this aspect of the novel is that it is simply appropriate, merely fitting in the context of a novel that is about a people and a realm that the real course of time and Western history has passed by. As Woodcock says of the novel and of this peculiar feature within it, A Strange Manuscript "is not a futuristic vision, since the Kosekin are a pre-mechanical people living on the verge of a prehistoric past whose reptilian monsters still survive to haunt the sea and air" ("De Mille" 177). In the prevailing critical estimation, the novel's prehistoricism, at the very most, is, again to quote Woodcock, a sign of the "intellectual modishness" of De Mille's writing, an indication of the extent to which De Mille "deliberately plundered current non-fiction." From Melville's Typee, adds Woodcock, De Mille obtained the idea of "a race of gentle and generous" cannibals; from Prescott's Conquest of Mexico, he acquired the idea of "knives plunged in victims' hearts on tops of pyramids"; and from "Owen's reconstructions of prehistoric reptiles, Darwin's speculations on the origins of coral reefs, [and] the narrations of antarctic explorers" ("De Mille" 175), De Mille procured the scientific wherewithal to create his prehistoric sub-Polar world.

Such conclusions are no doubt in part true but it is hard to believe that more is not meant or intended by the novel's prehistoricism, particularly given both the novel's thematic concern--belief and faith--and the period in which the novel was written--at the very dawn of the Darwinian revolution in scientific theory and discovery. Of course, it is here that the matter of the novel's dating becomes highly significant. As we have already noted, the novel was not published until 1888, eight years after the novelist's death. Until quite recently, most have believed the novel to be a late work written in the last decade of the author's life; and that belief is based on a number of good reasons: De Mille never sought publication of the novel; the novel shows strong indications that it was not finished, at least not to De Mille's complete satisfaction; and the novel shows, as Kilian has put it, "a skilled writer in complete control of his material, and . . . certainly does not seem to be an apprentice's work" (67). In a 1968 unpublished M.A. thesis on De Mille, however, Douglas E. MacLeod first suggested the interesting possibility of a much earlier date of composition for the novel. The most concrete evidence that MacLeod furnished for his case was a portion of a March 1880 letter from James' younger brother, Alfred Henry De Mill, to James' father-in-law, Dr. John Pryor. The relevant passage of the letter is the following:

> The "Copper Cylinder" MS is one of the first stories ever written by James & he was never able to make a satisfactory dénouement to the plot in it, & consequently I do not think he ever offered it for sale. I read it over some years ago and told him that the concluding chapter could be so [re-]written with advantage, & [though] he certainly agreed with me, I do not know whether he has ever touched it since or not. (qtd in MacLeod 104)

On the basis of this and other evidence supplied by MacLeod, in particular a number of sketches (De Mille was an habitual, and talented, doodler of his college notebooks and sheets of comic verse) which date from the early 1850s, De Mille's years at Brown University, and which depict scenes remarkably like some in A Strange Manuscript, Kilian concludes "that De Mille did begin work on Strange Ms quite early, perhaps even while in college, but did not put it into its final form until some years later" (67). More recently, working from the evidence of Alfred De Mill's letter and taking into account also "the known facts of De Mille's life in the decade" of the 1860s, Parks has come to the conclusion that there were two periods in that decade that especially would have provided De Mille with the opportunity to compose the novel: "during the years at Acadia (late 1861 to mid-1865) and in 1867 before he began The B O W C [The Brethren of the Order of the White Cross, the first in a series of books for boys] and The Cryptogram" ("Strange" 64).[10] It is unlikely, of course, that the novel's date of composition will ever be be finally fixed. The matter, however, is important, for clearly the work was written extremely nearly in time to the historic and, in many ways, spiritually and intellectually devastating year--1859--of the publication of Darwin's On the Origin of Species.

Indeed, with the date of that historic publication in mind, and taking into account also the novel's treatment of its geophysical and paleontological subject matter, we are led to another possibility--and it must be considered a strong one--that the novel was mostly conceived and perhaps even largely completed, not in the 1860s or 1870s, but in the late 1850s, before publication of Darwin's Origin. In the novel, the passages in which the symposium members debate the authenticity and the origin of the prehistoric life that inhabits the Kosekin world presuppose on the part of the author a keen and current interest in the subject. Typical of such passages is the following, one in which Congreve, "the doctor" of the symposium, concludes what he can from some of More's description of Kosekin saurian life:

> I think . . . that I understand pretty well what [the creatures] were, and can identify them all. As the [Kosekin] galley passed the estuary of that great river, you remember that [More] mentions seeing them on the shore. One may have been the "Ichthyosauraus." This, as the name implies, is a fish-lizard. It has the head of a lizard, the snout of a dolphin, the teeth of an alligator,

> enormous eyes, whose membrane is strengthened by a bony frame, the vertebrae of fishes, sternum and shoulder-bones like those of the lizard, and the fins of a whale. Bayle calls it the whale of the saurians. Another may have been the "Cheirotherium." On account of the hand-shaped marks made by its paws, Owen thinks that it was akin to the frogs; but it was a formidable monster, with head and jaws of a crocodile. Another may have been the "Teleosaurus." . . . (146-7)

At the very least this passage suggests a date of composition some time after 1854, the year of publication of Richard Owen's Geology and Inhabitants of the Ancient World, upon which, according to Parks, De Mille drew for his descriptions of the saurians mentioned in the passage (introduction xxxi).[11] More generally, however, this passage and others like it reveal more by omission than by commission, for conspicuously absent in the novel, in spite of the references to Owen and other contemporary scientists, scientific theorists and writers, is any direct mention of Darwin or any implied reference to his theories of natural selection and evolution. Owen is mentioned repeatedly, but never, for example, is he mentioned in the context of his famous 1860 British Association debate with "Darwin's Bulldog," T. H. Huxley; nor is he ever mentioned in the context of his now infamous personally vindictive denunciations of Darwin and his work. If Darwin's work is at all represented in the novel it is only, as the earlier comment by Woodcock already gives us to understand, in the form of some of the scientist's early geological study of coral islands (published in Structure and Distribution of Coral Reefs [1842] and Geological Observations of Coral Islands [1844]), work that, for example, is a likely source for a passage such as the following, also spoken by Congreve:

> The coral islands are called "atolls." They are nearly always circular, with a depression in the centre. They are originally made ring-shaped, but the action of the ocean serves to throw fragments of rock into the inner depression, which thus fills up; firm land appears; the rock crumbles into soil; the winds and birds and currents bring seed here, and soon the new island is covered with verdure. Those little creatures [zoophytes] have played a part in the past quite as important as in the present. All Germany rests upon a bank of coral; and they seem to have been most active during the Oolitic Period. (235)

In terms of the novel itself, of course, and regardless of whether the novel was written before or after the publication of Darwin's Origin, the lack of explicit reference to the Darwinian controversy is appropriate in many respects: for whatever reason, De Mille chose to set his novel, to use the in-themselves-intriguing words of the novel's first line, "as far back as February 15, 1850," and thus to include the controversy, of course, would have been anachronistic;[12] and, too, the lack of controversy is in many ways consistent, as shortly we shall see, with the characters of the symposium members who provide the scientific commentary, and who, in spite of their apparent expertise, are adept at piling fact on fact but seem to be blind to the implications of what they say. These points notwithstanding, however, it seems unlikely that De Mille, who clearly and explicitly makes use of some of the most contemporary of scientific data and speculation by Victorian scientists, Darwin included, would not have made equally clear and explicit use of the latter's more contentious data and speculation. The strong possibility of a date of composition that predates Darwin's Origin might seem, of course, to be all the more support for the belief that the novel's scientific portions are merely innocuous banter, mere "intellectual modishness" on De Mille's part. Both close examination of the novel and understanding of the antecedents of the Darwinian controversy in Canada, however, suggest otherwise. They suggest, indeed, a writer synchronously and seriously attuned to the growing fears and tensions of his time and context, a writer whose work in a sense carefully augurs the destructive fury of the storm to come.

McKillop, in A Disciplined Intelligence, clearly shows the extent to which pre-Darwinian "work in astronomy, geology, and paleontology, in particular," work "by Kant, Buffon, Laplace, Herschel, Cuvier, Lyell, and others," had already seriously eroded the conception of the "essentially static, mechanistic universe of Newton's physics and Paley's physico-theology" (98), a conception which, to the orthodox mind, was almost as important as Biblical revelation in preserving "the traditional conception of a Truth indivisible and absolute" (90). "By 1859," writes McKillop, "the _fact_ of organic change was well known; there was lacking only a theory of _mechanism_ by which such change took place" (99). And although Darwin's theory of just such a mechanism was ultimately "decisive," it was not entirely unexpected in the context. For example, McKillop's survey of the 1860s decade's weekly issues of the Methodist _Christian Guardian_, a popular religious periodical read by more than just Methodists, leads the historian to a revealing, if somewhat surprising, conclusion: "Darwinism in itself was not considered the major threat to orthodox religion. Not even the subject of review in the _Guardian_, Darwin's _Origin_ was merely symptomatic of the general threat posed by speculative thought to eternal Christian verities" (117).

Delitescent in _A Strange Manuscript_ is precisely this simmering pre-Darwinian concern, the mid-century fear of the gathering threat to intellectual, spiritual and social stability posed by the heretical new directions of strengthening Victorian speculative inquiry. Although the members of the symposium in _A Strange Manuscript_ seem themselves to be largely unaware of the extent to which their speculative thought represents the beginnings of an heretical spiritual and intellectual departure from Victorian orthodoxy, it is clear that De Mille intends his reader to be aware of their heterodoxy and their spiritual emptiness. The story-within-a-story technique which De Mille uses, however, may tend to make the reader take less care than should be taken, for in shifting periodically from More's bizarre, seemingly incomprehensible and "unreal" narrative to the symposium's comprehensible and seemingly more sane and "real" commentary which frames and interpolates that narrative, the reader may assume that these four are less characters in a novel than legitimate Victorian authorities guiding the reader to some kind of understanding of the bizarre world which forms the fictional heart of A Strange Manuscript. In other words, the reader, often frantic for interpretive help, tends to be lulled into an unquestioning assumption of the symposium's reliability. That assumption, however, is both mistaken and dangerous. Although, indeed, the symposium is intended to function as a device that helps the reader temporarily to suspend his disbelief insofar as the strange manuscript is concerned, its function for the most is not to represent the author's voice, not to be the "implied author" or the author's "second self" (Booth 71), directly providing the reader with the authorial beliefs, attitudes, values, and ideas that are crucial to the understanding of the work.

It is clear from their introduction that De Mille sees these four characters as precisely that, characters in the author's fictional world. Individually, the four are distinguishable: the "stoutish" and middle-aged Congreve, "the doctor," as he is called, is the "medical attendant" to the group and a man who clearly has kept himself abreast of the Victorian scientific discovery; the "refined and intellectual" Oxenden, "late of Trinity College, Cambridge," is the group's linguist, philologist, and student of world cultures and religions; the "restless" Melick is the group's self-appointed "*literateur*"; and the host of the group, aboard whose yacht the others have gathered, is Lord Featherstone, "young, handsome, languid, good-natured to a fault, with plenty of muscle if he chose to exert it, and plenty of brain if he chose to make use of it--a man who had become weary of the monotony of high life, and like many of his order, was fond of seeking relief from the *ennui* of prosperity amid the excitements of the sea" (60). Perhaps most decisive in helping the reader decide the group's function and significance and De Mille's attitude towards them, however, is the foursome's collective character: they all are characterized by the ennui which especially troubles Featherstone. In their indolence and dilettantism these four are like those more famous literary figures that have since become the type of the lost later Victorian gentleman: a Mortimer Lightwood or Eugene Wrayburn, the two "briefless barrister[s]" of Dickens' Our Mutual Friend (Gill 26); or a James Harthouse of Dickens' Hard Times, who, before "going in for" Utilitarianism and finding it "a bore," had "tried life as a cornet of Dragoons, and found it a bore; and had afterwards tried it in the train of English minister abroad, and found it a bore; and had then strolled to Jerusalem, and got bored there; and had then gone yachting about the world, and got bored everywhere" (158). Indeed, De Mille may not have ended A Strange Manuscript either to his or to our complete satisfaction, but there is a certain appropriateness to the way in which he allows the novel to trail off:

> Here Featherstone stopped, yawned, and laid down [More's] manuscript.
> "That's enough for to-day," said he; "I'm tired, and can't read any more. It's time for supper." (269)

As Featherstone says earlier, "[we] . . . are open to conviction" (145). In the context, Featherstone intends this remark as a response, on behalf of the three in the group who are or, rather, who want to be, convinced of Dr. Congreve's scientific arguments for the manuscript's authenticity, to Melick, the lone sceptic (of scientific arguments, that is) among them, but the comment nevertheless stands out as a admission of the malaise, the spiritual and intellectual drifting, that afflicts all four, Melick no less than the would-be believers of science.

De Mille, then, maintains a safe ironic distance from the symposium members, not only from them as people but also from them as authorities. Their deficiency as experts has to do not so much with their knowledge as with their understanding of the implications of their expertise. As Kilian rightly concludes:

> Congreve piles fact upon fact, fascinated by minutiae and ignorant of their significance. His equally limited colleague, Oxenden, demonstrates brilliantly that Kosekin is an evolved dialect of Hebrew, and that the Kosekin are therefore the Ten Lost Tribes. Yet he and the rest of the symposium seem to miss the implications of his analysis: that if the Kosekin are our spiritual cousins, and have pursued our common heritage to its logical extreme, then we shall have to re-examine the Judeo-Christian foundations of our present values to see whether they, or we, are found wanting. Such a re-examination will have to go beyond Lord Featherstone's idiotic anti-Semitism and his canting assertion that "Too much money's a howwid bas, by Jove!" (65)

Kilian is entirely right here but in a way that needs careful elaboration. Certainly the Kosekin world and the satire that De Mille has embedded in that world seem to cut to the very heart and soul of the Western Judeo-Christian tradition and heritage. And certainly, too, of course, the object of De Mille's concern and the subject of his satire is the mind of those who share the spiritual emptiness of the Kosekin; as Kilian goes on to argue, and as we have already seen, the symposium members are just another godless people in a novel that is replete with them. But more important yet in establishing the nature of De Mille's concern and satire is the mind, amply reflected in the symposium, of those whose values are such that they are able to believe in the existence of the Kosekin culture and world. As Kime says of De Mille's method in those parts of the novel devoted to the symposium's speculations, "the principle is early established that, no matter how bizarre and implausible More's reports of his experiences may at first appear, by reference to one area or another of modern knowledge they may presently be accounted for and thereby intellectually domesticated" (298).

It is not only, then, that the symposium do not have the traditional moral and spiritual conviction which would provide them with the direction, the sense of purpose, the stability and the security of their heritage; it is also that, like many in their context and era, they are beginning to show signs of having a new conviction, a belief in the primacy of the intellect, a conviction which, according to the author, is cutting them all the more adrift from that life- and soul-saving tradition and heritage. As McKillop says of the quandary that resulted from the period's new-found faith in the efficacy of the reason and the intellect: that faith led to the acceptance of "the reality of a world governed [only] by physical laws," which in turn led to the acceptance of a "world [that] provided abundant evidence of the 'agency of evil,' . . . but no reason for it" (Disciplined Intelligence 139). And it is only a short step from the latter apparently unanswerable question, of course, to an essentially nihilistic view of the kind that Oxenden presents in the novel; a "deep underlying conviction of the vanity of life, and the worthlessness" (236). In a comment that clearly reveals De Mille's perceptive discrimination of both the spiritual predicament latent in the age's speculative inquiry and the order of thought that led many a Victorian to that predicament, Oxenden suggests that this "solemn truth," that "human life is not a blessing," is amply confirmed by what to him is the fact that "suffering has been the lot of all living things, from the giant of the primeval swamps down to the smallest zoophyte. It is far more so with man" (236). De Mille's attempt to distance himself from this grim perception becomes clear from the context in which the view is presented, a chapter which the novelist ironically has entitled, "Oxenden Preaches a Sermon." The remainder of that "sermon," a spurious attempt by Oxenden to discover some kind of spiritual rationale for his conviction, is revealing as much in what he omits as what, spiritually and intellectually, he commits himself to. "All philosophy and all religions," says Oxenden, have concluded that

> life has ever been, and must ever be, a prolonged scene of labor intermingled with suffering. The great Indian religions, whether Brahmanic or Buddhistic, teach as their cardinal doctrine that life is an evil. Buddhism is more pronounced in this, for it teaches more emphatically than even the Kosekin that the chief end of man is to get rid of the curse of life and gain the bliss of Nirvana, or annihilation. . . . The intelligent Hindoos, the Chinese, the Japanese, with many other nations, [also] all cling firmly to this belief. Sakyamoum Gautama Buddha, the son and heir of a mighty monarch, penetrated with the conviction of the misery of life, left his throne, embraced a life of voluntary poverty, want, and misery, so that he might find his way to a better state--the end before him being this, that he might ultimately escape the curse of existence. He lived till old age . . . and left to [his "innumerable followers"] as a solemn legacy the maxim that not to exist is better than to exist. . . . Even among the joyous Greeks we find this feeling at times bursting forth; . . . and not even a Kosekin poet could express this view more forcibly than Sophocles in the Oedipus at Colonus:
>
> "'Not to be born surpasses
> every lot;
> And the next best lot by far,
> when one is born,
> Is to go back whence he came as
> soon as possible. . . .'"
>
> (236-7)

The passing reference to the Eastern mystic who preached the blessings of privation and death but who lived to healthy old age is in itself enough to alert us to the irony that undermines the sermon; more seriously indicative of the preacher's mind and the blindness of his vision, however, is his argument that *all* philosophical and religious traditions point out only the complete vanity of human life. All traditions, that is, but one--Oxenden's very own Christian tradition. Oxenden's sermon serves, in a sense, is a fine a literary or fictional testament to the "shatter[ing]" of "Christian teleology" that in the Victorian Canadian context, as McKillop's study shows, was the result of the "extension of science into the realm of cosmology, ethics, and man's spiritual life" (*Disciplined Intelligence* 138).

What, of course, has prompted Oxenden and the others to revealing such heterodox views in the first place is More's narrative of the Kosekin; the symposium members' convictions emerge from their attempts to justify and rationalize the illogic of the Kosekin world and life view. More's narrative, then, though it remains, of course, a satire in itself of all that we have already credited it with being a satire of, is perhaps mostly a test--a test which is failed--of the quality and kind of the symposium's conviction. Indeed, the Kosekin world can be seen as a kind of creation or a concrete projection of the Victorian heterodoxy that logically supports such an illogical world and that makes the incredible seemingly credible. It is as if, in other words, the symposium, as Melick half-jestingly suggests More has done, "had only . . . step[ped] into the British Museum, and in a couple of hours . . . crammed up on all those points in science, philosophy, ethnology, and theology" (238) and then gone out and created a world from the collected pieces of modern Victorian knowledge, beliefs, and ideas. The result is a world that, it seems, literally brings to life Victorian theological and philosophical, anthropological and cultural, geophysical and paleontological discovery and belief; a world that is peopled by a race that, because their heterodoxy has cut them off from the heart and soul and mind of their past, at best is only a hollow moral shell of the Christian race it once was; a world whose civilization has regressed into darkness, of primitivistic nihilism at the one extreme and materialistic hedonism at the other. Look on this absurd world, De Mille seems to be telling his contemporaries, and if you can find the means to believe it, it is yours.

What De Mille himself does not believe, a careful reading of the novel in its context begins to make abundantly clear; what De Mille himself does believe, however, requires yet some final clarification. Nowhere in the novel, of course, does De Mille make clear his values, ideas, and vision of life. This "authorial silence" (Booth 271), of course, is mostly to De Mille's benefit and credit. There can be little doubt that De Mille's writing of A Strange Manuscript acknowledges the validity of the critical principle that an author, "by the kind of silence he maintains, by the manner in which he leaves his characters to work out their own destinies or tell their own stories, . . . can achieve effects which would be impossible if he allowed himself or a reliable spokesman to speak directly and authoritatively to us" (Booth 273). All the more is such silence a strength in the case of a writer who, by almost all external evidence, was a committed Christian. Although a Christian, De Mille, as we have seen, both in the novel and outside of it scorned mindless pietism, but it is nevertheless still a credit to his art that he himself did not fall victim to the kind of evangelical tractarian Christian fiction-writing which many of his contemporaries fell victim to.[13] De Mille's achievement is one shared by the best of the Anglo-Canadian mind in the Victorian context. Caught in the "interplay between critical inquiry and moral affirmation," and aspiring to a "moral imagination" that would "establish and maintain right order both in the commonwealth and in the soul," the Anglo-Canadian mind did sometimes, concedes McKillop, "find expression through the narrow focus of Protestant morality," yet it also at other times "was capable of transcending the tenets of religious denominationalism and addressing itself to universal questions" (Disciplined Intelligence ix-x). De Mille's achievement is clearly that of the latter. Although the novel's authorial silence is a strength of the novel ~~and~~ a source of its achievement, however, it is also potentially a hazard. The varied critical responses to

De Mille's novel are confirmation enough that such silence, which insists that only by indirection shall we come to know the author and his mind, is potentially treacherous, particularly in the case of a work which, like A Strange Manuscript, holds within it, sometimes precariously, it seems, a large measure of iconoclasm and heterodoxy. The least that can be agreed upon, then, is that De Mille in the novel holds values and beliefs not exclusively nor readily identified or labeled as Christian, that, in short, De Mille transcends narrow denominationalism; however, in order to work towards a more complete and comprehensive critical understanding of the novel, we must be as clear as we can be about what precisely the author holds true and how and to what extent he transcends dogmatic or pietisic belief.

Perhaps the most important way that the reader's attention is directed to the novel's authorial perspective is in the directions the work's satire takes. As Parks concludes and as we have also seen, "the satire of the novel is . . . double-edged, an assault upon extremes of opposite kinds" ("Strange" 76). On the one hand, the novel exposes the "extreme self-denial and consequent life-denial [of] . . . Kosekin society," while on the other hand, it exposes the "extreme self-indulgence and consequent denial of transcendence and moral idealism [of] . . . Western society" ("Strange" 74), and as a consequence the reader is driven to find between the extremes the middle ground that, if only by implication, represents the authorial perspective. We have seen already, too, of course, how the novel's extremes meet in common selfishness and senselessness: transcendental, otherworldly idealism, in and of itself, is, practically speaking, is no less self-indulgent and, spiritually speaking, no less absurd than worldly, hedonistic materialism. We must remember, however, that the novel's extremes are still extremes; they are still poles apart and are none the easier reconciled for all their coming together in the novel's satire. The novel may point the reader to the middle path as the proper way, and to that way also may evidence outside the novel point, perhaps even more clearly. "De Mille's position in the midst of [the] confusing welter of ironies and cross-purposes," says Parks, "is far from obvious [and] . . . runs the risk of mystifying the reader and leading the critic into irresponsible interpretation [; and] . . . an appeal outside the literary work to the nature of the creator is the likeliest means of keeping one's feet in the slippery mazes of ironies and counter-ironies" ("Strange" 76). Parks, as we have noted, finds such external interpretive assistance for his reading of A Strange Manuscript in De Mille's scant biographical record and in the author's other writings, from the both of which the critic deduces a man who "aligned himself with the theological and ethical climate of the Anglican via media" ("Strange" 71). However, although De Mille's life and his writing both point out the way, it is a way not easily found, as, again, both the author's life and his writing testify.

De Mille's life, although it shows a man who intellectually may have discovered the _via media_ to be philosophically and ethically the truest and best course of life, also shows a man who nevertheless practically and emotionally was beset by the difficulty of reconciling material satisfaction and spiritual happiness. Indeed, critics have frequently been disturbed, and sometimes led astray, by the extent to which in their estimation De Mille was ever, in Woodcock's words, the "middlebrow entertainer," the "bifocal novelist," who, even "when he wrote with a . . . serious underlying intent, . . . still kept in mind the need to write acceptably" for that "circulating library readership" which sustained him through close to thirty mostly popular books ("De Mille" 175). De Mille had his spiritual ideals but clearly, it seems, he also had his material longings. And, indeed, this cannot be denied. As Kilian points out, "De Mille's life was dominated by three business failures--his church's, his father's, and his own" (Kilian 66)--that seem to have left a distinct mark on him. The first failure, that of his church, was the result of a misinvestment in an Ohio mining venture by a number of noted Maritime Baptists, among them De Mille's father and Dr. Edmund Crawley, President of Acadia College; De Mille and

President Crawley's two sons, friends and school-fellows of De Mille, were despatched to Cincinnati, in MacMechan's words, "to see what could be saved from the wreck" (413). The second failure was one that involved De Mille's father's "business reverses" and, in particular, was the result of the financial trouble that his father's lumber business encountered in the mid-1850s; De Mille left the troubled Ohio mining venture and returned to St. John where, in 1856, he opened a bookshop, "intending both to help his father and to establish himself in a congenial career." The third failure, De Mille's own, was that bookshop, which, when it dissolved in 1859, had amassed "debts totall[ing] $20,000, for which De Mille made himself liable" (Kilian 61). Although De Mille shortly thereafter accepted the Acadia professorship, his debts continued to burden him; "he was not to free himself from those debts until the early 1870s," says Kilian, and "even then, the responsibilities of his own growing family" (61) continued financially to press upon him.[14] De Mille found, however, that the quickest way to free himself from his financial troubles was to write, and write he did, turning out in 1872 alone, for example, six titles. We should not forget, however, that A Strange Manuscript was not published in De Mille's lifetime, nor did De Mille ever seek publication of it. That he intended the work, therefore, as just another title on the road to financial stability or material comfort should not be assumed.

Indeed, A Strange Manuscript can be seen as growing out of, and fictionally responding to, the incongruity of the author's life and the frustration he experienced in attempting to reconcile the conflicting idealistic and materialistic claims upon him. An 1878 opening address by De Mille at Dalhousie College is revealing in this regard. "The age," he said,

> is too much given up to mere money getting and is beginning to find this out. Its king, Mammon, is one who devours ourselves and our children. We see around us too much high living and low thinking. Plain living, high thinking, culture of the mind, denial of the body--these are surely noble aims. (qtd in MacLeod 92)

Says Kilian of De Mille's reflections in the Dalhousie speech:

> There must have seemed little connection, in [De Mille's] own experience, between those "noble aims" and prosperity. . . . Only by grinding out simple-minded thrillers had he gained some financial independence. A man whose morality was brightened by a lively sense of the absurd, De Mille must have relished the irony in his role as upholder of "Plain living, high thinking, culture of the mind, denial of the body"--virtues unavoidable to those like himself. (62)

Of course, the Dalhousie address occurred late in De Mille's life, likely a good number of years after the writing of A Strange Manuscript; yet the facts of De Mille's life, and particularly the facts of the financial failures of the middle and late 1850s, the years which, as we have argued, would have seen De Mille hard at work on the novel, indicate that the potential for irony which Kilian here describes is a potential that was present through the course of most of the author's adult life. Like Stephen Leacock, that more famous Tory and imperialist writer and academic who, even more than De Mille, has had his integrity questioned for presumably having sacrificed to mammon both his idealism and his novelistic potential,[15] De Mille seems likely to have been keenly, personally, and increasingly alive to the practical hardship of maintaining a steady faith in traditional beliefs, values, and ideals in the face of an increasingly utilitarian, materialistic, and money-driven society.

And so, too, does De Mille's novel attempt to dramatize the practical, human difficulty of reconciling the extremes of self-indulgence and self-denial, of materialism and idealism, of rational inquiry and moral conviction, of social liberty and social order. In fact, the near impossibility of such reconciliation, and yet, too, paradoxically, the near possibility of such reconciliation, are both embodied in a number of the characters that

De Mille singles out as being worthy not only of our special attention but also of our sympathetic understanding. The careful regulation of reader sympathy for certain characters, even and especially characters who, for all the sympathy that they enlist from us, yet fall short of being reliable representatives for the authorial view or perspective, is another means by which the novel directs the reader to the discovery of the authorial course or vision and to discovery of the "Aristotelian principle of the golden mean" (Parks, "Strange" 73). We have already been witness to the subtlety of De Mille's regulation of reader sympathy for one character, the Kohen, who, "by the touch of humanity which has made him a failure by Kosekin standards," is several steps closer than many in the novel to the "principles of moderation" that form the authorial view (Parks, "Strange" 75); and who embodies at least the attempt, in the face of practical and material odds, truly to live the ideals which rest in his heritage and within himself.

And there are others, at least one in each of the key groups of the novel, who, like the Kohen, at least humanize if not adequately or entirely synthesize the ideological and moral antitheses that the novel presents. We dislike, indeed, find repulsive, the mass of the Kosekin, yet we like the Kohen, for his humanity and in spite of his ideals; so also, we dislike and, indeed, mistrust the Kohen Gadol, yet we like his daughter, Layelah, also for her humanity and also in spite of her ideology or "philosophy." Layelah, in fact, is the one character in the novel who especially and demonstrably embodies a key principle in the novel's attempted reconciliation of self-denial and self-indulgence--the principle or idea of self-love. As we have noted, the Kohen Gadol has fashioned for himself and his daughter a decalogue--one formulated in direct antithesis to principles held by the orthodox Kosekin--of radical political and moral commandments, ten articles dedicated to the principle of "selfishness as the true law of life." This radical decalogue, of course, inevitably invites comparison with the Christian Decalogue and the result of the comparison, surprisingly perhaps, is not necessarily or entirely ironic: as Christ's New Testament summary of the Law suggests, we are to love God, certainly, but we are commanded also to love our neighbour _as ourselves_. The latter injunction, moreover, which in principle combines the opposites of self-love and love of others that the novel struggles to synthesize, might well serve as the best subtext for the novel, and it is a subtext which is vigorously dramatized in Layelah. More's assessment of her character and life is essentially true: "it required immense strength of mind and firmness of soul to separate herself from the prevalent sentiment [self-denial] of her [orthodox Kosekin] nation; and though nature [and upbringing, he might have added] had done much for her in giving her a larger portion of original selfishness than was common to her people, still she was a child of the Kosekin; and her daring was all the more remarkable" (171). Indeed, this indomitable spirit that Layelah shows has the potential to subvert both the Kosekin kingdom of self-denial and her father's paradise of self-indulgence. The comparison to a character in a more recent anti-utopian work will perhaps help to clarify the matter: in a number of respects Layelah is like Julia in Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four: both characters have intellectually internalized much--too much--of the pernicious ideologies of their respective worlds, but both, often subconsciously, are subversive to those ideologies precisely because they govern their lives along non-ideological lines. Like Julia, Layelah struggles to live her life from the heart and from an almost intuitive knowledge of self. As a result, of course, heart and head often come into conflict, a conflict which in Layelah's case is the source of some consternation for her, as we see in the following scene, for example, in which Layelah decides to forgo the materialistic happiness that her father has taught her to live for in favour of winning happiness with More:

> "But you love riches, do you not? [says More] and you must want them still."
> "No," said Layelah, "I do not want them now."
> "Why, what do you want?" I asked.
> "You!" said she, with a sweet smile . . . .
> Layelah was silent for a few moments, and then went on in a musing tone.
> "As I was saying, I love you, Atam-or [More's Kosekin name], and I hate Almah because you love her. I think Almah is the only human being in the world I ever really hated; and yet, though I hate her, still, strange to say, I feel as though I should like to give her the immense blessing of death, and that is a very strange feeling, indeed, for one of the Kosekin. (191)

Layelah's discovery here of the green-eyed monster within herself is carefully mitigated or regulated by the author. In part, of course, it is Layelah's disarming ingenuousness that serves in this mitigating capacity and we must take care that that ingenuousness does not deceive us into forgetting her essential hedonism or forgetting, too, that she can be remarkably devious, unprincipled and reckless of others in her attempts to win happiness for herself at all costs. But what consistently qualifies our criticism of her and mostly enlists our sympathy for her is the way that she is true to herself and to her heart; as Kilian says, "Layelah may be cynical, but she is no hypocrite, and her honesty and self-knowledge contrast sharply with More's foolish hypocrisy" (65), and contrast sharply, as well, we might add, with the sentimentality and inanity of the priggish Almah, Layelah's rival for More. Her weaknesses notwithstanding, Layelah, from that self-perception and self-love, derives a sheer vitality and enthusiasm for life and for others (and derives besides, again like Julia in Orwell's novel, even a sexual energy) that, stemming as it does from the heart and not the head, is more threatening to her world's ideologies than the most carefully crafted counter-ideology. Indeed, what we begin to see in Layelah is not so much the rejection on De Mille's part of ideological extremism and the consequent finding of an ideological middle ground as is it a rejection on his part of ideology altogether. To some extent, of course, this is simply another way of saying that De Mille scorned cant, from whatever ideological quarter. True as that may be, there is more to De Mille's scorn of cant and ideological extremism than may be apparent, as consideration--consideration within the period's intellectual context--of the last and perhaps the most important of the novel's character reveals.

As we have already seen in glimpses, the symposium of the novel does not speak with one united voice: in the midst of the pseudo-scientific pedantry of the symposium, Melick speaks frequent and lone dissent. And precisely because of his sane and sensible scepticism and opposition, he is yet another character who both induces special sympathy or understanding from the reader and merits special examination by the reader. That De Mille reserves some special approbation for Melick is already suggested by the puckish not to mention clever use he makes of Melick to anticipate and counter reader criticism of the novel. "Two-thirds of the way through A Strange Manuscript," says Woodcock, "one's criticism of the manner in which More's narrative is written is at least partially disarmed by De Mille's voicing--with a certain amount of donnish mischievousness and through Melick's mouth--precisely the same criticism." Melick, who, as Woodcock adds, "takes the line that the manuscript is in fact a work of fiction and not an account of authentic adventures" ("De Mille" 175), says of the manuscript and its writer, for example:

> His plan is not bad, but he fails utterly in his execution. The style is detestable. If he had written in the style of a plain seaman, and told a simple unvarnished tale, it would have been all right. In order to carry out properly such a plan as this the writer should have taken Defoe as his model, or, still better, Dean Swift. "Gulliver's Travels" and "Robinson Crusoe" show what can be done in this way, and form a standard by which all other attempts must be judged. But this writer is tawdry; he has the worst vices of the sensational school--he shows everywhere the marks of haste, gross carelessness, and universal feebleness. (228)

Woodcock is indeed disarmed by this use of Melick and sees in it yet another indication of the "ambivalence of . . .

intent" of the "bifocal" De Mille: on the one hand, according to Woodcock, the novelist wanted to pander to a middlebrow readership, largely through the sensationalism and romance of More's tale; on the other hand, he wanted to appeal to a reflective audience, largely through promptings to such an audience, in passages such as this by Melick, to search More's tale for deeper ironic levels of meaning. Melick, no doubt, may prompt us to such a search, yet he is more than a device to encourage highbrow, vigilant reading of a middlebrow, sensationalist story. As we have concluded, both the matter of conviction and belief in themselves and, more specifically, the matter of belief and conviction vis-à-vis the authenticity of Kosekindom are fundamental to understanding De Mille's method and purpose in the novel; and when, thus, we are confronted with a character who, through his dissent, regularly forces us to confront these matters, we must be prepared to take special regard of him. As More's manuscript reaches the limits suspending reader disbelief, as the credible becomes the incredible and the sane becomes the insane, it is Melick who is there to remind us that the tale is only a fiction, a "satire," as he says, "directed against the restlessness of humanity [,] its impulses, feelings, hopes and fears" (226). But more importantly, as the rest of the symposium pile scientific fact upon scientific fact, "finding reasons for their faith" (155) in the Kosekin absurdities, it is Melick who repeatedly comes bearing authorial sanity, warning us, for example, that "there is no theory, however wild or fantastic, which some man of science will not be ready to support or fortify by endless arguments, all of the most plausible kind" (70).

In fact, while Melick's reliability is not complete (he is not just in the symposium, he is of it and shares its ennui and its spiritual aimlessness), he alone comes close to discovering and articulating, not only what "the writer [of the manuscript] . . . mocks"--the "mere search for happiness *per se* . . . [, that] must always result in utter nothingness"--but also what "the writer teaches"--

> that the happiness of man consists not in external surroundings, but in the internal feelings, and that heaven itself is not a place, but a state. It is the old lesson which Milton extorted from Satan:
>
> "What matter where, ~~if I be~~ still the same--"
>
> Or again:
>
> "The mind is its own place, and of itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."
>
> (226-7)

While at an intellectual level the final resting place of the authorial vision and view of life still may be the golden mean between the moral, cultural, ideological and philosophical extremes that so much of the novel directs our attention to, at the human level, Melick seems to point out, that resting place exists within the self. The idea that the search for happiness, for purpose, for truth, is ultimately an inner search is consistent with what we have seen of the novel's more significant characters. It is consistent with the Kohen, for example, whose integrity of character is the result of living the ideals which, though they are inherent in his tradition, are also an internalized part of his nature; it is consistent with Layelah, whose integrity of character is the result of an intuitive understanding and love of self; and it is consistent with Melick himself, whose response to the empiricism and the faith in fact and reason which typifies both his friends and his milieu takes the form, not most importantly of reasoned counter-argument and debate, but rather of simple appeals to common sense.

And, finally, the search within the self is consistent with what the intellectual history of the period and context reveals. The last defense of the conservative mind in mid- and late-Victorian Canada, in the face of repeated and sustained affronts and attacks, by technology and materialism, social atomism and moral liberalism, or, more generally and significantly, by rationalism and empiricism, was an appeal not mostly to the head--for how could one respond, reasonably and intellectually, to a Darwin? Rather, it was an appeal to the heart or to the soul from whence intuitively one could, in the words of the University of Toronto's Dr. James Bovell (whose Outlines of Natural Theology, for the Use of the Canadian Student appeared in the same year as Darwin's Origin), "attain to the knowledge of the existence of immortal life and of a Supreme Being" (qtd in McKillop, Disciplined Intelligence 81). According to Bovell and according to the Common Sense tradition of philosophy of which Bovell was a part and which dominated the intellectual life of early Victorian Canada, man's social existence, his aesthetic life, even his intellectual and rational being, were governed by the "moral nature," the "religious conscience," the intuitive sense of God, that dwelt within him. As Bovell's text explained this to students:

> Not what is taken from experience, but what [man's] genius creates for him, is his criterion for testing what he shall approve and what disapprove. He has his own principles or standards of judgment within himself, and with which the material and sentient world has nothing to do. He has also that self-knowledge which determines the intrinsic excellency of . . . his rational being, and what is due to himself and worthy of himself in all his actions. (qtd in McKillop, Disciplined Intelligence 80-1)

Of course, it is not necessarily the case that De Mille in A Strange Manuscript consciously and precisely adheres to such a spiritual and moral psychological conception of life. Indeed, the absence in the novel of explicit reference to

Christian conviction, let alone of an attempt to point out explicitly and unambiguously what in the author's estimation is the source of Christian morality or conviction, that it be within man, for example, or in nature, or from divine revelation, would suggest a spirit and mind which very hesitantly is beginning to approach the mind and spirit present in the later stages of the Victorian period in Canada, when, according to McKillop, "Common Sense had been dismissed as faulty in its psychology . . . and incapable of meeting the needs and challenges of an age of inquiry and analysis"; when "Paleyite natural theology had in large measure been replaced by an . . . Hegelian conception of social evolution"; and when "the Baconian ideal in science had also proved inadequate under the onslaught of Darwinian method" (Disciplined Intelligence 205). In other words, De Mille and his novel foreshadow, by as much as half a century or more, the inevitable decline of idealism. "With its obvious connection with positivism, materialism, cultural relativism, and the social sciences," observes historian S. E. D. Shortt, empiricism "was better equipped for survival in the twentieth-century" than was idealism, "which . . . was readily associated with intuition, romanticism, metaphysics, and Christianity" (139). The idealistic De Mille, of course, as we have seen, fights hard in A Strange Manuscript against the demise of "the old orthodoxy of ideas" and, in the form of his satiric denunciations, rails loudly against the increasingly prevalent empiricist ethic. But we have seen, too, that if he rails, De Mille does not rail piously or dogmatically; in spite of the bitterness of his satire and in spite of what, by most external accounts, seems to be the strength of his personal religious conviction, De Mille's idealism seems tempered by an honest, non-dogmatic recognition that empiricism can neither be piously shouted into submission nor theologically debated into defeat.

Indeed, in De Mille's idealism we begin to see not only the inevitable end of idealism but also to capture a hint of the mind and spirit that contributed, through the course of several decades, to its end and also, therefore, to the beginnings of modernism. That mind and spirit, or more fittingly, perhaps, that attitude, was one which simply tired of theological debate. Such a state of mind, in fact, is quite consistent with the novel's mysterious conclusion or its unfinished state (which we have already seen to be appropriate in the context of the convictionless symposium). "At first amused with the absurdities of his fiction and its ruling characters," De Mille, as Camille La Bossière concludes, simply "grew to become tired of their endlessly predictable iteration. . . . There really was not much more of intellectual interest to hear or see or say--except, perhaps, 'etc . . ., etc. . . .'" (52). Such fatigue with debate, as Cook has argued in The Regenerators, led ultimately to the creation of the modern secular society. The "roots of modernism" thus lie in the Darwinian controversy, a controversy which, as Cook says, "turned less on the validity of the evolution-by-natural-selection hypothesis than on the theological implications which Darwinism appeared to bear for the biblical account of creation and man" (Cook 9). Unable to formulate an effective theological response to the Darwinian challenge, the idealist mind began to "downplay or ignore doctrine" and theology (Cook 6). In terms of Canadian history, this tendency is best exemplified in the formation of the United Church in 1925; "it is commonplace in Canadian religious historiography," writes McKillop, "to observe that there was a singular absence of theological discussion during the debates on Church Union." In the decades leading up to Church Union, the orthodox idealism of mid-nineteenth-century Canadian religious life gradually assumed the form of the sociological idealism--the social gospel movement--of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the place of doctrine and debate, this new idealism "substituted a code of right conduct . . . which presumed to be Christian but which," says McKillop, borrowing the words of the early twentieth-century Methodist Church leader, S. D. Chown, "could be reduced to the proposition that 'The Golden Rule' was the 'sum and substance of the sociology of Jesus'" (_Disciplined_

Intelligence 227). Although De Mille and a A Strange Manuscript antedate this transformed and reequipped idealism by several decades, already in this novel can we capture a foretaste of that idealism to come. A Strange Manuscript's attempt to discover the proper course between self and other, its insistence upon, not piety or dogma, but self-knowledge and concomitant service to society as the means to happiness, would suggest that the social gospeller's Golden Rule is, in a sense, but a corollary of De Mille's Golden Mean. Yet the "jettisoning as 'non-essential' [of] those traditional forms of belief," the attempt, in other words, "to put Christianity into the "nineteenth- [and early twentieth-] century dress" of the social gospel," was also an "admi[ssion] that for eighteen centuries the church had taught lies" (Cook 59). With little more than its social utility left to justify it--and even that became obsolete with the advent of modern sociology--Christianity was on the way to becoming irrelevant.

A careful examination of De Mille and his novel in the context of the period, therefore, clearly reveals a novelist and novel neither out of time nor out of place, nor, for that matter, out of contact or connection with modern Canada. Such an examination gives us a writer and thinker who, without doubt, belongs to a significant tradition in Canadian ideas and letters. Such an examination presents us with a man whose concern for his time and place led him, not to a reactionary, polemical, or dogmatic conservatism, but rather to a humanized, moral concern for the preservation and reformulation of traditional ideals that could thus serve his nation's political, cultural, social, and spiritual future. Such an examination, above all, serves to show us that James De Mille and his Strange Manuscript deserve our continued regard and recognition.

CHAPTER THREE

AGNES MAULE MACHAR:
IMPERIALISM AND THE SOCIAL CRUSADE

If De Mille's novelistic treatment of the problem of faith and conviction in an increasingly materialistic and empirical age already reveals a kernel of the renewed idealism that would emerge in the last decades of the nineteenth century in English Canada, Agnes Maule Machar's social gospel writing, and in particular, her best fictional work, the novel Roland Graeme: Knight, published in 1892, seems to reveal that kernel brought to nearly full fruition. Gone, or so it seems, is the ambiguity of thought and emotion, and gone too, it appears, is the hesitant and finally tired defensiveness of one who like De Mille is only painfully prepared to confront the Darwinian demiurge; in its place is the seemingly bolder spirit of one whose idealism seems equipped to see the crisis of conviction, and its attendant social, cultural, and political problems and crises, through to a victorious, indeed, to a blessed, end. Yet if Machar seems bolder than DeMille in confronting the problems and questions that characterized this age of transition, hers is a boldness or a stridency that is often a false confidence, at times even a deceptive guise, masking many of the same insecurities, and in her fiction, resulting in many of the same difficulties, that De Mille and his writing revealed.

Machar was a social critic and a social gospel writer, and, like "virtually every social reformer in late Victorian Canada," she "wanted to stand orthodox Christian teaching on its head." As Cook explains, the aim of the period's social critics "was almost invariably a reinterpretation of Christianity to make it more relevant to the everyday world of Canadians. . . . Rather then sanctioning the social order, Christianity properly interpreted should provide the standard against which society should be judged" (8). The new social standards which Machar and others attempted to promote were often as radical in the context as the overturned Christianity upon which they were premised. Like many of her fellow social gospellers, Machar became, for example, a strong admirer of Henry George, the celebrated American social critic; and while (like another of her social gospel mentors, the fellow Presbyterian George Grant, Principal of Queen's) she seems to have stopped short of accepting what one commentator of the period called George's "'whole hog solution' of single tax and free trade" (Machar readily accepted the latter but reserved judgement on the former scheme), she joined her fellow Georgeites in condemning the "growing [social] injustices . . . : monopoly and tramps, poverty in the midst of plenty, child labour, slum housing, low farm produce prices, discrimination against women" (Cook 115-6). If the strong liberalism of her social views was based on a theological liberalism, however, Machar, perhaps more than other social gospellers, was careful to preserve her essential Christian belief. Intellectually at least, she tried to keep her distance from the more extreme thinkers and reformers of the period, those further along the way of transforming social gospel into secular sociology. Whatever "strong liberal tendency" that she did show was, as Cook says, her "fashion of defending what she believed to be Christianity's essence: its ethical teachings. That did not suggest any slippage toward agnosticism: for her, Christian morality depended upon Christian belief." For her, or so she believed, the period's theological and intellectual liberalism was not as large a problem as some were making it out to be: she was "willing [to] accept[] . . . both the higher criticism and the modernist view that there was no conflict between Christianity and modern culture" (188). For Machar, as for many others in the social gospel movement, the age was less a crisis of personal faith and conviction, or a crisis of dogma and theology, than was it a "Social Crisis" (Shortt 137). Indeed, the problem, as a good many social gospellers, Machar included, ultimately convinced themselves, was not that Darwin and the new empiricism had rendered traditional spiritual and moral conviction obsolete but rather that such traditional conviction was too much being perceived as obsolete and incompatible with the age's scientific naturalism;[1] and, more to the point, that this perception had become so common had a far-reaching social implication--it threatened to leave Canadian society spiritually bankrupt and morally directionless. Also, as De Mille before her seems ultimately to have concluded, the crisis and any hope of its resolution was not to be dealt with or achieved primarily in terms of theological or philosophical debate. As social gospel historian Richard Allen has noted, "the social gospel movement did not regard itself as primarily a theological movement"; in fact, "its preoccupation with social problems may have been partly motivated by a desire to escape from theological perplexities" (4).

The idea, or as was more often the case, the attitude, of wanting to escape theological debate is a recurrent one in Machar's writing; mostly it is implicit in her work, but on occasion, particularly in her non-fictional writing (that is, in some of her many contributions to periodicals of the day[2]) it is explicit. Typical of Machar's non-fictional prose, for example, is an 1893 article in two parts, written for The Week, on the Parliament of Religions, a congress of representatives and leaders of world religions which met in conjunction with the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. The prevailing spirit of the age with which Machar is in such sympathy is, of course, already suggested by the fact of the Parliament itself, a congress that was idealistically dedicated to the uniting of "all religions against all irreligion, to [the making of] the golden rule the basis of the union, to [the presenting] to the world the substantial unity of many religions in the good deeds of the religious life," all these principles and more like them to be considered at the congress "without controversy and without making attack or passing judgment on any other religious body or systems of faith or worship" ("Impressions," pt. 1, 1115). The earliest sittings of the congress, however, inevitably dealt with the theological differences between religions, and, dutifully reporting on these proceedings in Part One of her article, Machar is almost immediately beset, and at times overwhelmed, by the theological implications and complications inherent in the very idea of international religious unity. Machar's own religious or spiritual liberality notwithstanding, and the parliament's stated aim of religious equality also notwithstanding, her reportage is regularly undermined by contradictory and revealing qualification. When, for example, she insists that the sessions have shown her "that what we call heathendom is not simply and solely a mass of degraded and corrupt superstition," that liberal insistence is more than a little qualified when she adds that the sessions have shown her "many earnest and honest men" who hold "a *core or kernel* of religious truth . . . with as tenacious, and *to a certain extent*, intelligent [a] grasp as that with which Christians generally hold the *fuller and clearer* light of Christianity" ("Impressions" 1116; emphasis mine). We cannot, of course, and should not, necessarily expect Machar to have forsaken her belief that Christianity is the light or that it holds a larger core or kernel of truth than do other religions. And it should be noted, too, that for Machar, as, it seems, for most of the participating Christian parliamentarians, the enemy is not other religions but rather is irreligion, irreligion anywhere and in any agnostic or atheistic form; in other words, for Machar and other Christians at the Chicago Conference, that one has any religion--be it Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, or Mohammedanism--is better than if one has no religion at all. Yet Machar appears unwilling to admit to the likelihood that the theological incompatibility of, or inconsistency among, world religions is in itself an invitation to scepticism, especially in the context, a period which, it must have seemed, was daily revealing or confirming empirical principles far more universal than religious or spiritual principles had ever been demonstrated to be. The liberal spirit of the conference was "hardly acceptable" to all who attended; as Cook notes by way of one Canadian clergyman's response, the "religion of humanity" which the conference promoted was coming dangerously close to "one in which 'Christ may perhaps be allowed a seat beside Buddha, Confucius, Huxley and Joe Smith'" (Cook 63). If Machar shared some such reservations, she did not make them plain, but yet she does not hide her relief when, in Part Two of her report for _The Week_, she is able to report on the parliament's later sittings, sessions on "questions relating to the bearing of religion on social life and progress." "Thursday, September 21st, was . . . 'a turning point, in the history of the Conference,'"[3] she enthusiastically begins her second installment:

> Up to that time the discussions had concerned themselves chiefly with abstract doctrine or speculation--with what we might call the Godward side of religion. But on the twelfth day of the Congress began the consideration of the duties and responsibilities which, on [_sic_] any real religious basis of thought, must rest on the conscience of man towards his fellow man. ("Impressions" 1138)

Here, clearly, not on the Godward side but on the manward or social side of religion--and away from theological speculation and debate--Machar is more comfortable, and also more unrestrained. With obvious appreciation for the sentiment, one which surely captures her own sense of the occasion and of the age, Machar records for her readers the full rhetorical flourishes of the American Unitarian theologian Francis Greenwood Peabody:

> The centre of interest, alike for philosophers and agitators, for thinkers and workers, for rich and poor, lies at the present time in what we call the social question. The needs and hopes of human society, its inequalities of condition, its industrial conflicts, its dreams of a better order, these are the themes which meet us daily in the books and magazines, the lectures and sermons which speak the spirit of the present age. Never before in the history of the world was the moral sense of all classes thus awakened to the evils of the present or the hopes of the future. . . . The same subjects are being discussed in working-men's clubs and theological seminaries. It is the age of the social question. ("Impressions" 1138)

The attempt to escape or evade the complexities of theological debate seems evident in Machar's fiction, too. There can be little denying that even Roland Graeme: Knight, "the most ambitious" of her eight novels (Gerson 215)--"her most serious exposition of the [social] ills of the day" (Gerson 232)--when considered in outline form, shows what appears to be the author's naive, often sententious, and even simple-minded didactic thinking on "the social question," accomplished at the expense of, or in retreat from, theologically or intellectually compelling treatment of the relation between religion and social problems. The novel traces the tribulations of its Knights-of-Labour hero, Roland Graeme, a recent emigrant from Canada to a small but growing American industrial city, Minton, where the young man attempts to make a success of The Brotherhood, a labour newspaper of his own founding. Raised a Christian by his Scottish-Canadian parents, Graeme claims to have lost his faith because of the worldliness he has seen in supposed Christians around him and because he has been unable to reconcile orthodox Christian theology and doctrine with the recent teachings of science. But from his Christian upbringing he has nevertheless retained a passion for humanity that has now motivated him to take up the Minton Brotherhood venture. When, at the outset of the novel, Graeme attempts to enlist the support in his venture of some Minton clergy, he is introduced to two men, each a foil to the other, who in their respective ways will reveal to Graeme the spiritual path and practical road that he should take and who also reveal to the reader Machar's thoughts about right religion and the social gospel. One man, Reverend Cecil Chillingworth, quickly reveals to Graeme and to us what religion should not be: Chillingworth is an arrogant, egotistical, fashionable clergyman who caters to the whims of the well-off in his mostly affluent congregation and who is more concerned about maintaining his fame in the pulpit than he is about ministering to the spiritual and physical well-being of the Minton working poor and unemployed. The second clergyman, Reverend John Alden, reveals the opposite: Alden is the epitome of the altruistic, dedicated, spiritually alive, and plain-preaching clergyman, an active minister to all in spiritual or physical distress but a minister and an advocate especially for the down-trodden labourer and the poor. Alden quickly becomes Graeme's guide and mentor, not only in terms of how best to help improve the lot of suffering humanity but also in terms of his personal struggles with faith and belief. And from his spiritual mentor Graeme learns that, his difficulties with faith or belief notwithstanding, through his good works and his Christ-like devotion to suffering mankind and to the perfection of humanity and life on earth, he has really been a Christian all along. As Alden tells Graeme, "I . . . feel that when I am the best man, I am most a Christian!" And when Graeme interjects, "But then, the historical and literary arguments! Don't you find any difficulties there?" Alden responds in a way that reveals the seemingly evasive Machar we have seen before and reveals also the related idea (present in De Mille's work, too) of the inward search for spiritual happiness and truth:

> I have never had too much time to think of them. . . . I was thoroughly satisfied, on other grounds, before they came much in my way, and I've had my own work to do. I think, however, from what I've read on the subject, that they have been met, in a manner satisfactory to _me_, at least. But to my mind religion

> is not a literary or historical question. Neither is it to be founded, as some tell us, on the witness of the intellect, which has neither compass nor rudder on that sea; nor, as others tell us, on emotion, which is variable and evanescent as these sunset hues. . . . [It is founded] on something deeper than either; on the sense of righteousness, the deepest, truest consciousness of humanity. Speaking for myself, I want God--want the Divine Perfection, which is the same thing. (238)

And as together through the course of the novel Graeme, Alden, and a number of others sympathetic to the cause work in the spirit of applied or practical Christianity (work, incidentally, which leads them to minister to the needs of an alcoholic mother and her daughter who, we ultimately discover, are the abandoned wife and daughter of Reverend Chillingworth), Graeme moreover learns how best the utopian ideal of Divine Perfection on earth, in other words, Christ's Kingdom on earth, can be achieved. Alden's, and by implication Machar's, solution to problems as diverse as labour unrest and alcoholism and the plight of working women is essentially education. The proletarian class must be educated to the evils which suppress them, so that they can do whatever is within their "peaceful means" to "remedy wrong" (148), but they must not be so much educated or woken up that they are inspired to revolt and disorder ("Let the horrors of the French Revolution" warn of the danger of too much waking up [148], cautions Alden). And as for the wealthier classes, they must be educated to the needs of their social, spiritual and intellectual inferiors, so that in time with the help of those in the upper classes "this great mass of toiling humanity [can be raised] in the moral and spiritual scale, as well as in the material and intellectual one" (125).

Such is the novel in rudimentary form and on the basis of that it is not entirely difficult to understand why, even in its own day, and certainly today, the novel has had its share of detractors, most of whom, however they have phrased their criticism, see the novel and its author as being intellectually superficial, evading substantial critical analysis or debate. Within a few short years of her death in 1927 Machar was dismissed as a "Victorian optimist" (Cumberland, "Agnes Maule Machar," Queen's Quarterly 331) whose "shell of Victorianism" that she "lived within" (Cumberland, "Agnes Maule Machar," Willison's Monthly 35) made her "certain to fail" as a writer "because she linked her deepest religious feelings to an orthodoxy with which the critical thought of that time was playing sad havoc" (Cumberland, "Agnes Maule Machar" Queen's Quarterly 334). In general, recent assessments have done very little to revise this estimation of Machar, and, in fact, her Victorianism being even less to the taste of the post-modern critical sensibility than it was to the modernist critical sensibility, such assessments have dismissed her all the more; essentially unchallenged are Frank Watt's evaluations of Machar and the novel for The Literary History of Canada, that Machar is a writer in the "genteel tradition" and that the novel "is essentially a romantic story of high society . . . [that] preaches . . . noblesse oblige" (477).

Yet it is wrong to dismiss Machar so summarily. It is wrong, for example, both to Machar and also to the better intellects caught in the fervour of this Age of the Social Question, to characterize the social gospellers' seemingly blind devotion to religious idealism and their retreat from theological or critical debate entirely by way of the metaphor of a flight or an escape. Just as apt or accurate in the case of many social gospel writers, Machar included, is the metaphor of a search. Though flight from theology definitely characterizes part of the social gospel mind, "the social application of the gospel," as Richard Allen notes, "eventually demanded fuller rationalization in theological terms." Indeed, Allen fittingly describes the social gospel as a "movement in search of a theology" (4). Machar's writing, of course, with perhaps some exceptions,[4] rarely can be said to be theological in the purest sense of the word--indeed, as we have seen, she is uncomfortable with theology--yet there is frequently a sense in her work of the author's, sometimes conscious, sometimes not, grasping for some greater and more solid justification for her social observations and thought. At the very least, Machar does not escape or hide from the fact that the origin or the nexus of her social concern is the period's empiricist, materialistic and progressivist character. She may not confront scientific naturalism in ways that are theologically compelling or complete, but neither does she avoid the confrontation. And at its best, Machar's work is an eclectic, if not always systematic, reflection of various attempts by intellectuals of the period to "expand the limits of truth" (Shortt 138), that is, to offset the disintegration of traditional, orthodox conviction by attempting to integrate or reconcile a waning traditional moral authority with modern views and ideas.

The "most frequent charge" made against science by "defenders of Christianity" in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, observes A. B. McKillop in A Disciplined Intelligence, was that science "fostered a materialistic and skeptical outlook on life" (154). That concern was Machar's concern and she did not hesitate to lead the charge. For example, in an 1890 article for The Week, tellingly entitled "The Murder Microbe," Machar suggests a destructive connection between a rise in brutal crime in Canadian society and "the shallow materialistic philosophy which runs through so much of the popular thinking and writing of [the] day,--the philosophy which refuses to take account of man's higher nature, but considers him simply as a bit of highly developed protoplasm" (264).[5] For Machar, the age's materialism, which in her estimation is the base of the period's scientific naturalism, is, potentially at least, regressive, not necessarily progressive, and in this respect, her views argued with those of some of the age's prominent intellects. In her mind, "the worst symptom" of the period's prevailing materialism was not simply "the gospel of despair." Indeed, she adds perceptively, "to many it [materialism] is not felt as a 'crushing mental burden' at all! On the contrary, they seem very pleased to accept it with its corollary, 'Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die!'" Like De Mille before her, then, Machar sees a hedonism--and for her especially, a mindless hedonism--as one disturbing consequence of the spirit of the age, and it is a hedonism that in her estimation promises "the absolute triumph of a blind, brutal egoism over the altruism which has slowly been cooling through ages of immoral growth" ("Murder Microbe" 264). Machar's angrily-voiced comments here are simply an emphatic variation of a concern she regularly presented for her readers' speculation, the question or "doubt whether the human race is advancing quite so fast as some would maintain" ("English Poor Laws" 182).

Yet while Machar could be most strident in her defense of the faith, and with apparently no room for compromise could vehemently challenge what she once termed the "fond delusion of universal progress" ("Voices Crying" 170), she was not as intellectually single-minded as she often appeared to be. Indeed, she herself was not uninfected by that same progressivist spirit which she repeatedly decried. As studies by McKillop and others have shown, the "hegemony" of a renewed, progressivist and positivist philosophical idealism which would dominate the first decades of the twentieth century and which would result in "a reorientation of Canadian Protestantism," emerged from antecedent "nineteenth-century advocates of a reconciliation of science and religion through idealism" (McKillop, Disciplined Intelligence 205). Machar, her periodic and serious questioning of science and of the period's progressivism notwithstanding, was one such advocate. By the 1890s, as McKillop notes, Paleyite natural theology had all but died; or as Machar writes (without qualm, it would appear) in an 1894 memorial essay on Canadian-born biologist George J. Romanes, "Christian apologetics have in our day far outgrown the reasoning of Paley" ("Late George J. Romanes" 753). Natural theology, adds McKillop, "had in large measure been replaced by an equally teleological, but dynamic, Hegelian conception of social evolution" (Disciplined Intelligence 205). It is clear from Machar's writing that often she saw the reconciliation of science and religion as likely and possible; and, moreover, in that writing she shows a social evolutionary thought that at times seems nearly Hegelian in form and conception.

Her admiration for Romanes, for example, the "celebrated associate of Darwin and somewhat uneasy agnostic" (Cook 187), is in itself evidence of Machar's generous attitude towards science and an indication of her desire to bridge the chasm between science and religion. Her admiration for the biologist, who was born in Machar's city of Kingston and whose father was professor of classics at Queen's during Machar's father's principalship there, was not simply the admiration of a family friend or a native son made good. Intellectually Romanes had strayed far from his conservative Kingston origins. As McKillop says, Romanes' "many biological writings gave him the reputation as one of the leading scientific naturalists of his day" and some held him to be the inheritor of Darwin's mantle (Disciplined Intelligence 157). Though she could not agree with all of Romanes' conclusions, Machar, as her writing shows, clearly knew the biologist's work well,[6] and her frank and open admiration of what she saw as the "great ability, close analysis, logical comprehensiveness and logical force of his writings on biological subjects" was not mere empty rhetoric ("Late George J. Romanes" 752). But what most impressed Machar about Romanes was the extent to which the latter, to use McKillop's words, was "one of those men whose views on life hovered 'between science and religion'" (McKillop Disciplined Intelligence 157). (It was, in fact, Romanes' 1873 essay "Christian Prayer and Natural Laws" that had compelled Machar into the extended prayer debate with positivist W. D. LeSueur in the pages of the Canadian Monthly two decades earlier.) Romanes' "deeply religious . . . nature," as Machar puts it, led him before his death to recant or revise a good deal of his life's scientific work, particularly speculation on the development of man's moral sense, and he did so apparently to recover from the near despair that seems fitfully to have plagued him throughout his life. For her readers' edification, Machar was all too eager to point out that near despair; in both a memorial essay on the biologist and a review of the biography of him written by his wife and published in the year after his death, Machar made a point of triumphantly presenting her readers with the following passage from Romanes' essay "A Candid Examination of Theism":

> And forasmuch as I am far from being able to agree with those who affirm that the twilight doctrine of the new faith is a desirable substitute for the waning splendour of the old, I am not ashamed to confess that, with this virtual negation of God, the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness; and although from henceforth the precept 'to work while it is day' will doubtless but gain intensified force from the terribly intensified meaning of the words that 'night cometh when no man can work'; yet when at times I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it, at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the

> sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible.[7]

For Machar, Romanes' life and thought were testimony to her belief that man cannot live by science alone. They were not intended as testimony, however, to cause one to throw over ideas of science completely. It was not that Romanes came to reject outright all the scientific thought and discovery that he had worked for; it was, summarizes Machar, that he "gradually . . . came to see that the evolutionary fire of nature was not as he had once thought fatal to theistic belief" ("Late George J. Romanes" 754).

We can, of course, question Machar's sincerity in suggesting that science and Christian theism are not each other's mortal enemies, and that, moreover, the two are reconcilable. Indeed, in view of the apparent eagerness with which she presents her readers with Romanes' doubts and anxieties, we should question her sincerity. Machar, in fact, was not alone in wanting to "seize upon" Romanes' repentance from scepticism "as a sign of revitalization for beleaguered Christianity" (Turner 134). In England following Romanes' death in 1894, notes historian Frank Miller Turner, both Charles Gore, the Canon of Westminster, and Ethel Romanes, George Romanes' wife, were quick and eager to publish the "very fragmentary notes on religion" that Romanes had left without "positive instructions that [they be] published" (135). Gore's and Mrs. Romanes' eagerness, concludes Turner,--and his comments could be applied to Machar as well--suggests that they

> appropriated the painful odyssey of an intelligent and sensitive man to serve a religion in which, at best, he held but a tenuous faith. Both writers sought to transform the life of a man who had always avoided dogma of any form into a prop for the faltering cause of dogmatic Christianity. (136-7).

Yet for Machar, however much we may question her motives in the Romanes instance, there seems to have been a genuine hope that a middle ground between science and religion could be found, and perhaps the best evidence of this hope exists in the extent to which her writing imbibes the evolutionary spirit of the age. Machar could find no difficulty, for example, in providing her readers of The Week with a generous and sympathetic review of a published attempt by Reverend E. C. Cummings, an American, to integrate ideas of scientific naturalism and religious belief. Cummings' book, Nature in Scripture: A Study of Bible Verification in the Range of Common Experience is premised, summarizes Machar, on

> two root-ideas;--the first, that the creation and redemption of man are but aspects of the Creator's great evolutionary plan, in which nothing is unforeseen or unprovided for. . . . The other and correlative root-idea, is that of an educative discipline, carried on by the Divine father, in regard to each of His children,--a discipline to which

> the author assigns no arbitrary time limit. (rev. of Nature 707)

These two ideas, says Machar, lead the author to approach "the central doctrine of Christianity, not, as it is too often regarded, as a break, an anomaly[,] in the great chain of evolution, but as a necessary element in man's development into a higher state of spiritual being." Cummings' book, then, which, as Machar observes, is able to approach the creation story and the story of the fall as a "poetic . . . representation . . . [that is] entirely in harmony with modern evolutionary conceptions" (rev. of Nature 708), is hardly orthodox in the Victorian context, and Machar's sympathy for its ideas is, at the very least, evidence of her open-mindedness. Yet Cummings' book is not as heterodox as it might well have been either: it does not go the Hegelian distance in its attempt to discover a reinvigorated idealism which merges subject and object and gives metaphysics a basis in reason. And hence its appeal for Machar.

For no matter how much she wishes to effect, and, in writing such as the review of the Cummings book, nearly succeeds in effecting, a close integration or reconciliation of science and religion, of material existence and spiritual life, Machar remains essentially dualistic in her conceptions. This, of course, is hardly surprising, given her strong ties to the Presbyterian church community of her family and region, and, in turn, given that community's strong ties to the Scottish Common Sense philosophical tradition. For Machar, as it was for the Common Sense tradition, metaphysics remains essentially intuitive, separate and distinct from objective reality and man's rational or intellectual ability to know that reality. And to the extent that her metaphysics incorporates elements of Darwinian or social evolutionary thought, an incorporation that was essentially inimical to the Common Sense tradition in its purest philosophical form, Machar's metaphysical thought or idealism is also tinged with hues of romanticism and transcendentalism (and a corollary pantheism in places). When, for example, in another article for The Week, Machar does with Darwin what later she who would do with Romanes (present the man's life, but not his work, as a kind of success story of the spiritual life), this essential dualism combined with a kind of intuitionist and romantic metaphysics (and aesthetics) becomes evident. Working from Darwin's famous admission that, after so many years of factual, empirical investigation, he no longer seemed able to take as great a pleasure in music and art as he had formerly been able to do, Machar draws the following lesson for her readers:

> Mr. Darwin's characteristic noble candour . . . enables us to exemplify a very important truth--that, even where . . . "higher tastes" exist in a very

> marked degree--they may be largely, if not entirely [,] atrophied by lack of use and nourishment. Moreover, if, as we have been accustomed to believe, and as Mr. Darwin seems . . . to admit, the poetical and spiritual powers are the highest efflorescence of humanity, Mr. Darwin gives us, in his own person, a curious instance of--not development, but retrogression. ("Gradgrind Criticism" 588)

There are then, for Machar, two essentially separate and distinct sides or realities to human life and existence: the one, which in Darwin finally lay dormant, can be associated, to borrow words from historian S. E. D. Shortt's study of the period's ideas, "with intuition, romanticism, metaphysics[,] . . . Christianity" and, in Machar's mind, with literature and art; the other, which Darwin's work epitomized, can be associated with "positivism, materialism, cultural relativism" (Shortt 139) and, in Machar's mind, with cultural and religious decline. Morover, that the "utilitarian tendency" and "empirical philosophy" of the age so suppress the "spiritual side" of life comes as no great surprise to Machar, but what shocks and outrages her is that there are those who advocate such suppression, in other words, that there are those who knowingly and "voluntarily deprive themselves of their noblest faculties, and go back to an old formula, slightly enlarged: 'Let us eat and drink and study science, for to-morrow we die.'" All that Machar can manage in the article is a wistful but bitter romantic longing that Western culture recover the unifying, transcendental vision of life that once its seers celebrated. "Prophets, saints and poets have lived in vain," she begins ruefully;

> In vain a Wordsworth has sung,
>
> "The light that never was on sea or land,"
>
> and in vain an Emerson has declared himself a "dear lover of the harmonies that are in the soul and in matter, and specially in the correspondence between these and those." ("Gradgrind Criticism" 588)

Machar's metaphysics or idealism, in other words, is at best a hybrid metaphysics or idealism, fluctuating and amorphous, often contradictory and inconsistent, yet reflecting the uncertainties of the period. Such an idealism is present too in Roland Graeme, with this difference, that the novel, unlike her non-fictional writing of the period, represents the author's only substantial attempt to work diverse thoughts and feelings, concerns and beliefs into a sustained and comprehensive whole.

Still, there can be little gainsaying that contradictions and inconsistencies are present in the novel. Carole Gerson, in a recent summary of Machar's thought and writing, points out one obvious inconsistency, or rather, several related inconsistencies, present in Machar's treatment of alcoholic intemperance, that social evil foremost in the minds of so many social gospel writers, and a foremost social concern of Machar's Roland Graeme. There is, first of all, Gerson points out, the intemperance of factory worker Jim Mason, that is, the intemperance of, as Gerson calls it, the "frustrated, underpaid proletariat [that] frequently takes solace in drink." Such working class intemperance Machar believes can and should be dealt with, suggests Gerson, noting that Machar's solution is the providing of "alternative forms of entertainment . . . , in [the novel's] case the 'Helping Hands Society,' which offers books, lectures, and lemonade." Then, notes Gerson, there are the excesses, but not just alcoholic excesses, of the upper classes, "represented by Harold Pomeroy, idle son of the factory owner, [who] are prone," adds Gerson quoting the novel, "to 'a life of unrestrained self-indulgence' [203,] presumably including alcohol, because they know no higher purpose" (232-3). That Machar has not focused on Pomeroy and other upper class characters' alcoholic intemperance per se, but has instead presented us with lives of general overindulgence, suggests to Gerson that Machar "saw [alcoholic] intemperance as a problem primarily of the middle and lower classes" (232). Gerson is essentially right in her criticism, yet she should recognize that Machar's somewhat anonymous inclusion of drink as just one of many excesses in the life of general excess which characterizes the idle rich is not simply an evasion of the question of, or solution for, alcoholism among members of that class. As her non-fictional writing has made abundantly clear to us, Machar's primary concern regarding members of the social, cultural, and intellectual elite is precisely a "lack of purpose," as Gerson calls it, that is the result of the age's agnosticism and materialism and which manifests itself generally in an eat-drink-and-be-merry hedonism. And as for a solution to such general self-indulgence and ennui among the wealthy classes (Machar's writing is rarely at a loss for practical advice, whatever we might think of its usefulness), it is that, like the crusading Graeme, they should find a social purpose, for example, helping the worker organize his Helping Hands Society, all the while putting the period's intellectual concerns out of mind.

Yet there is another related, more significant inconsistency, and a more revealing one, in Machar's treatment of the temperance problem. In addition to the intemperance of a Jim Mason and the excesses of a Harold Pomeroy, for which Machar presents solutions, there is the dipsomania of Mrs. Travers (the abandoned Mrs. Chillingworth, it turns out), for which a solution seems beyond human conception. Mrs. Travers' intemperance, which, in fact, becomes by the novel's end a "fatal craving" (219), is also, it seems, "a hereditary craving" (226), her father having died from drink and her young daughter now, too, showing signs of attraction to drink. But given the hereditary nature of her problem, Mrs. Travers, in Gerson's words, "is absolved of any responsibility," and Machar, it seems, "thus suggests that there are two kinds of alcoholism: one for which society is responsible, and one which is the result of genetic inheritance." The inconsistency is no doubt an odd one, and a problematic one for the novel. The two alcoholisms are undeniably convenient for Machar; as Gerson says, they serve her "didactic purpose" well (233). Mrs. Travers' hereditary dipsomania serves to emphasize the hypocrisy and selfish insensitivity of the clergyman husband who abandons her, and, by contrast, serves to emphasize the strong social sensitivity and commitment of Reverend Alden, Roland Graeme and others who vainly struggle to help her; the worker Jim Mason's intemperance, on the other hand, serves to emphasize Machar's insistence that alcoholism is a social problem for which there are practical solutions.

That society must deal with the intemperance problem, however, is not simply, as Gerson seems to suggest it is, the "central plank in [Machar's] platform of social reform" (232); and it is not, moreover, a plank that simply can be torn free and all its imperfections exposed. For Machar, alcoholism is not just a social problem; it is, in a sense, also a metaphor for moral weakness, both innate or hereditary moral weakness and acquired or learned moral weakness. This is suggested by the fact that the novel superimposes upon the social problem of intemperance the larger speculative question of the moral influence of heredity and environment; inconsistent and problematic as her treatment of the temperance topic may be, Machar is intent upon understanding this one social concern within the broader context of the period's questioning. Machar, as we have suggested, may not always find intellectually satisfying answers to questions but that does not prevent her from confronting those questions. And the heredity-environment question, already raised in the novel by way of the alcoholism problem, is one of the larger contemporary questions that continue to nettle Roland Graeme through the course of the novel. Indeed, Graeme himself, who, as we have noted, in spite of his Christian upbringing had come to reject orthodox belief, and who, in the narrator's words, "had rapidly assimilated [the] facts and theories" (49) that modern science had presented him, is testimony to the relevance of that question. Graeme's speculative intellectual and spiritual journey before his arrival in Minton had been, suggests the narrator, a "disintegrating process," and the "mystery of life and being seemed to have opened an abyss before him which he . . . seemed unable to bridge by the simple faith that had hitherto been enough for him" (50). Yet Graeme, unlike many others, had not been swallowed by the abyss. Thought having become a burden to him,

> he practically gave up the struggle for light, making up his mind . . . to follow the one compass in his possession--the Christian ideal and conscience that had been developed and educated with his own growth, till it had become an inseparable part of his moral being. He was at least happy in having his life founded on this rock, even though his eyes might be for a time blinded as the true source of his strength. (50-1)

The environment of his youth, then, it seems has preserved Graeme from the abyss into which so many had fallen. "The teachings of Christ himself," we read earlier, were "household words from his earliest infancy," and "principles of action seemed to him matters of course, which, as he too often afterward found, were, to the average Christian people with whom he came into contact, as an unknown tongue" (47). Yet Machar blurs the boundary between environment and heredity when she suggests that his moral nature had become an "inseparable part" of him. Indeed, in an inconsistency no less confusing than the one surrounding the temperance matter, Machar, within a paragraph of suggesting the rock of his youth as the source of his social conscience and altruism, says now that he was "altruistic by inherited temperament," and that for that reason "the 'enthusiasm of humanity' gradually possessed him like a passion" (51).

Whether Machar intends to suggest that a combination of environmental and hereditary influences determine the lives of people, or whether she believes that the former influence through time becomes the latter, is hard--perhaps impossible--to determine. But that she intentionally confronts this corollary question of the evolutionary debate, however evasive and unsatisfactory her answer, is clear. And, moreover, she willingly concedes the importance of such material influences. Elsewhere in the novel she confronts the heredity-environment question directly, and in the process compounds the matter by adding to her consideration of such material influences the consideration of a more intangible influence. Speaking with Reverend Alden about Nora Blanchard, whose charity and "active benevolence" make her, like Graeme, an "uncommon type" in Minton middle and upper class society, Graeme listens intently as the clergyman innocently suggests that it is Nora's family and upbringing that have made her "a sort of _rara avis_ among girls." Ever the questioning _philosophe_, Graeme uses the occasion to engage his mentor in more serious speculation:

> "You believe in heredity then, sir, and in environment?" said Roland.
>
> The clergyman looked at him keenly, but with a genial smile. "Certainly," he said; "I believe in both, but I believe also in something else, that is not either; and in this lies the difference between my philosophy and that of the people who are so bent on making _automata_ of us all. They always seem to me to give, in their own persons, a most apt illustration of the lines,

> "'Unless above himself he can
> Erect himself, how poor a thing is man!'"
>
> "Yes," replied Roland, "I believe we were meant to aspire. 'Excelsior' seems the motto of the universe." (40)

Man's need to aspire is a key notion in the novel, one that, for Machar, lies at the heart of any social evolutionary or progressivist ideas she may possess. The idea of aspiration, of course, was not an unusual one in the context. In The Victorian Frame of Mind, his classic study of English Victorian thought, Walter E. Houghton argues that ideas of aspiration were a frequent manifestation of the larger moral and social "enthusiasm" that characterized the period. And "if we look closely at Victorian aspiration," suggests Houghton moreover,

> we discover that the ideal object [of such aspiration], whether a great cause or an exalted conception of human nature, is often vague and sometimes non-existent. When that is the case, aspiration has changed its character and its dynamics. For where there is no definite goal, it becomes an end in itself: an exciting experience instead of an inspiring one, its motivation no longer being to live on a higher plane, but simply to live passionately. (291)

The notion of aspiration, present in both Machar's novel and in her writing of the period generally, no doubt has a good deal of the vagueness that Houghton here describes. The object of aspiration which she with others in the social gospel movement cherishes is, of course, the often vague ideal of a kind of Christian socialist utopia. On the level of social reform that object is often translated as a vague hope for a day when, to use Alden's words in the novel, quoted earlier, "this toiling mass of humanity" will be raised in the "moral and spiritual" and "material and intellectual scale[s]" (125). On the doctrinal or theological level--perhaps it might better be called the level of church reform--that object often takes the form of an ill-defined hope for an ecumenical or international religious age in which Christianity or religion, having forsaken "the unnatural barriers" that conventional theology has "built up between the followers of Him who left unity as his special charge, and mutual love as His commandment," will become "cosmopolitan in character" ("Centripetal Christianity" 7). On the political level, a level which, as we shall see, is important for Machar and an essential, even intrinsic, part of her ideas of progress and social concern, that object is sometimes as idealistically formulated as a Biblically-conceived hope for a "time when spears shall be turned into pruning hooks, and war, like other blots in our humanity, shall be no more" ("Centripetal Christianity" 7). On the level of aesthetics, or the level of literature and art, that hope, as we have seen from Machar's comments regarding Darwin's admission of aesthetic insensitivity, is for, not a culture of "Gradgrind criticism," in which, for example, the "flowers" of poets are "lopp[ed] off" as so many "unscientific excrescences," but for a "real literary culture" ("Gradgrind Criticism" 588) in which "higher tastes" are nourished in the appreciation of "writers with high ideals" not undermined by the "influence of a debasing materialism" ("Views" 391). And, finally, on the intellectual or philosophical level, that object, as we have seen time and again, is Machar's tenuous and vague trust that her age is "on the eve of a great reaction against the chilling and degrading materialism which, in the name of Science, has so long paralyzed faith and chilled moral aspiration" ("Centripetal Christianity" 8). Moreover, in the degree to which through all of these ill-defined hopes there runs an anti-theological or anti-intellectual strain which passionately insists upon right action, right belief, and right ideas, now, Machar reveals something of the hidden motive of "passionate living" for the moment that Houghton's study also describes.

By the same token, however, Machar's insistence upon immediate and practical application of Christian ideals would suggest that it is somewhat misleading to conclude that her aspiration, as Houghton says of other Victorian aspiration, "could not easily find its objective correlative" (Houghton 293). Her social aspiration, for example, however idealistically conceived, does take the form, to use Gerson's metaphor, of a platform with many planks for social reform. In fact, Roland Graeme shows Machar consistently attempting, at least, to ground her metaphysics and idealism in an awareness of human nature and material reality that is informed by ideas of contemporary scientific naturalism. She can note in passing, for example, and apparently without irony, that it is "natural selection" (174) that has put Miss Pomeroy, the factory-owner daughter and new convert to the idea of helping of the worker, "at the head of [a] little committee" of a newly-formed "Girls Club" which includes both "mill-girls" and women from other classes. *Noblesse oblige* of a sort this may well be, but with a difference that duly notes the Darwinian temper of the age.

Indeed, the crusading knight, Roland Graeme's, active advocacy of workers' rights and social reform, which, the prevailing critical consensus has it, best demonstrates both the author's social naivete and her condescension toward the working class, is also best understood in the context of social Darwinian ideas. When asked why he has dedicated himself to a life of helping the worker, Graeme's answer is revealing:

> I felt, as I think no entirely unprejudiced person can help feeling nowadays, that our working-classes do not get fair play in the great struggle going on about us; that here the "battle" is emphatically "to the strong," and that the weaker are being, perforce, driven to the wall,--crushed

> beneath the great iron wheels of Progress, Capital, Combination, and Protection. And I always had an instinctive sympathy with the "under dog in the fight." (124)

Though Machar's protagonist is here clearly revealed to be that most commercial and saleable of fictional commodities--the strong and virtuous hero-protagonist struggling against odds in unflagging support of the weak and down-trodden--and though Graeme's response here, then, might quickly be dismissed as evidence of the weakness of Machar's craft, the larger concerns of the novel should forestall our formulating so quick a conclusion. The struggle which Graeme has involved himself in is, for Machar, a struggle for survival, and survival, Darwinian theory would no doubt have warned Machar, goes to the strongest or fittest.[8] Graeme's intervention in the process of natural selection is essentially a variation on a theme that Machar returns to regularly through the course of the novel, the concern that the course of unchecked evolutionary progress, even the evolution of Christianity, may be blindly deterministic.

The Reverend Chillingworth, for example, who, as we have noted, represents precisely the form of Christianity that Machar finds most disturbing, even odious, portrays Machar's profound misgivings about the unchecked evolution of human society. Chillingworth's laissez-faire attitude towards social problems is premised on the belief that "human nature has a wonderful way of adapting itself to circumstances" (80). Thus entrusting his parishioners' worldly concerns to natural laws of adaptation and survival, Chillingworth has dedicated his ministry to his parishioners' otherworldly concerns, to the "lead[ing of] sufferers to look beyond" (81). One might suspect that the otherworldly, spiritual aspiration which Chillingworth here professes would be consistent with Machar's notion of aspiration, but that is far from the case--Chillingworth's idealism, paradoxically, is too purely idealistic. Chillingworth, in fact, is dramatized in the novel in terms of a continuing irony which shows us this (and also shows us that Machar's sense of aesthetic or artistic aspiration is not as vaguely idealistic or romantic as elsewhere in her writing it may appear to be). As through the course of the novel Graeme is hard at work addressing and remedying social evils, Chillingworth is consumed by something near to his heart, practice for a performance of Handel's Messiah that the clergyman is arranging and directing. For Graeme, this is an incomprehensible irony: that a clergyman, one who Graeme "had supposed" would have held "the practical diffusion of principles of [social] action . . . as dear . . . as they were to himself" but who in fact "could not spare [Graeme] a few minutes for the discussion of [such] matters," could nevertheless dedicate so much of his time to so impractical a venture such as the oratorio, however spiritually uplifting such a composition might be, is hypocrisy in the extreme. "Roland did not know yet," concludes the more worldly-wise narrator, "how easily some men can absorb themselves in beautiful ideals and vague generalities, till the practical side of life, with its tiresome details and rude collisions, becomes for them almost non-existent" (64).

Machar, in other words, is sensibly sceptical of a blind faith in progress, be it in the form of religious aspiration or social evolution. Chillingworth may "have no doubt," as he says in response to Mr. Pomeroy's condemnation of social action as "so much rank poison," "that all the evils complained of--and no doubt there are some hardships--can be remedied in only one way, in the spread of the Christian spirit of love and service which must eventually prevail over selfish and partial views." Machar, however, shares the doubts voiced by Mr. Archer, one of the Minton elite sympathetic to Graeme's cause, in his reply to Chillingworth:

> "And that would probably have been your verdict, in the last generation, as against abolitionists like Garrison and Phillips and Whittier, would it not?" remarked Mr. Archer, in his even, cool, slightly satirical tones. "Slavery would die out gradually, as the Christian spirit spread among planters. But then, the question would have been, again, Who should begin? Slave-holder number one wouldn't want to begin till slave-holder number two did; so it would

> be difficult to see how the reformation would get started." (97-8)

Human society will evolve, Machar seems entirely willing to concede, but without the active agency of those who guide and direct it, such evolution can obey only laws not necessarily consistent with principles and ideals of Christianity.

"The good man," writes S. E. D. Shortt of one prominent Victorian Canadian's conception of man and his place in society,

> was defined by his adherence to the natural conventions on which society was based and by his realization that the affairs of the world are "so complicated that it is little influenced by what men can do." The great man was he who helped society evolve upward "away from the beast" to which it was always in danger of regressing. (22-3)

These ideas are those of the imperialist and McGill History of Medicine professor Andrew Macphail but they could well serve, with little variation, as a summary of Machar's metaphysics and social thought: the life of the worker or the ordinary citizen, though he be a good man, seems in Machar's estimation to be inevitably bound and circumscribed by the brutal and natural laws and complexities of the world; the strength, nobility and idealism of a great man, a Roland Graeme or a Reverend Alden, in terms of the novel, is required to direct the society of good men in its proper evolutionary course. The near Carlylean regard for the place and function of heroes in society suggests that Machar's idealistic socialism is infused with, or tempered by, a strong, albeit qualified, individualism. In Machar's view, man's social evolution begins at the level of the individual in interaction with another individual, and if at least one of those individuals in truly selfless fashion has learned to subordinate his desires to those of the group or society, only then will it be possible for man's evolution to aspire to the divine. Machar's political thoughts, for example, reflect this idea.

"Patriotism," writes Machar in an 1886 article for The Week, "is only public spirit widened from the family to the country, just as cosmopolitanism is the same public spirit widened from the country to the world." She adds:

> It is only selfishness that prevents these successively widening circles of kindred feeling from having the full influence intended by the Father of us all. It is easy for the selfish man to be a patriot, if that means flag-waving and speechmaking on anniversaries, and boasting on all other occasions that his country--just because it is his country--can "whip all creation." But if it means--as it does mean--the seeking of his country's real good, even at personal sacrifice, it is just as impossible for the selfish man to be a truly patriotic citizen as it is for him to be a good friend and father. ("Patriotism" 716)

Machar's political idealism, which, as we shall see, is in essence one and the same as her social idealism, in many respects resembles a practical version of the philosophical idealism that characterized Anglo-Canadian thought and left its mark on social and political ideas at the turn of the century and into the next. "Society," the philosophical idealist argued, "must be conceived as an organism. The individual must subordinate private interests to serve the greater whole." Yet for the philosophical idealist social action nevertheless began at the level of the individual--"one could perform one's social duties in ascending forms of service to an ever-greater good, whether at the level of the church, the civil service, or the empire" (McKillop, Disciplined Intelligence 206). Machar would have agreed with Victorian Canada's strongest and most highly acclaimed proponent of philosophical idealism, Queen's philosopher John Watson (though she would have stopped short of accepting his Hegelian premise of "faith through reason"[9]), in comments he made to a 1901 Y.M.C.A. meeting in Kingston. "In God we 'live and move and have our being,'" Watson began. He went on:

> we are spirits capable of communion with the spirit of all things; the meanest as well as the highest object within our reach witnesses of this universal spirit; and, living in it, we may become worthy members of the family, the community, the state, the race. (qtd in McKillop, Disciplined Intelligence 207)

If the application of the Golden Rule in ever-widening spheres of influence sums up her social gospel idealism, the political vehicle of Machar's idealism was imperialism. As for other Canadian imperialists of the era, Machar's imperialism was really a form of Canadian nationalism. Moreover, in the estimation of historian Ruth Compton Brouwer, who has documented the extent and nature of Machar's literary nationalism and imperialism, Machar's was "a somewhat singular nationalism," a unusually "moral nationalism." "Even more than her contemporaries in Canada First and the movement for imperial unity," writes Brouwer, Machar "formulated a nationalist vision" the "chief characteristic" of which was--and we should not be surprised, given the extent to which we have seen the affirmation of a Christian moral imperative to be the one constant in Machar's writing--"an intense and all-pervasive moral concern" ("Moral Nationalism" 90).

Indeed, in her imperialism many of the diverse--and complex--strands of Machar's thought come together. We have seen, for example, that while on the one hand Machar retains a healthy conservative mistrust of the determinism inherent in ideas of social Darwinism and progressivism, she nevertheless has committed herself to ideas of an evolving Christian society. Such a turn of thought, we have also seen, is a reflection of Machar's constant desire to reconcile conflicting ideas of science and religion. But that desire in itself is furthermore a reflection of Machar's commitment to the ideas and ideals of imperialism.

Carl Berger, in A Sense of Power, has demonstrated the extent to which the Canadian imperialist mind was infused with the idea of mission, the idea of a kind of Anglo-Saxon manifest destiny which held the Empire to be "a divine agency of progress and civilization" (218). The imperialists for whom that sense of mission was strongest, Berger also suggests, were the turn-of-the-century imperialists, men such as G. M. Grant, G. L. Parkin, and Andrew Macphail, many of whom, like Machar, had a passion for Empire that was equalled by, and synonymous with, a passion for social reform and for the spread of the social gospel. A central "conviction which underlay the belief" in the sense of imperial mission that these men held, says Berger, "was social Darwinism, or the belief that the same ineluctable forces which impelled and guided biological evolution also worked in human affairs and world politics" (223). Yet paradoxically their sense of imperialist mission was also premised, as we have seen Machar's social gospel idealism to be, on the "belief that spiritual and not material factors made a nation great and that the preponderant forces in history were the human will and ideas" (219). They, then, also like Machar, "disdained the notion that men, like animals, merely responded to stimulus of nature; to them, deterministic environmentalism was a counsel of despair. Men made history--men inspired by ideals" (221).

The key to understanding this paradox, Berger's study also shows, was another conviction, one that also we have seen clearly in Machar's work, the ideal of "work, a notion which was translated from the area of personal ethics to apply to whole peoples and nations" (221). Indeed, the near Carlylean conception of the role of "great men" that we have seen in Machar's writing--men of high ideals, like Roland Graeme and Reverend Alden in Machar's novel, who, so to speak, intervene in the the social evolutionary process and direct society to aspire upward from the brutal and the bestial--was a corollary notion of this imperialist ideal of work. "Carlyle's invocation to toil," remarks Berger, "his praise of labour as self-fulfilment, and the notion that in work directed in the proper spirit man was continuing the work of God, provided the taproots of the imperialistic ethic" (222). For many imperialists, and for Machar too, it seems clear, the course of human history was not dictated firstly or foremost by material, environmental laws of the kind that the period's scientific naturalism had undeniably discovered; in the estimation of the imperialists, "the real engine of history" was the "human will . . . inspired by ideals" (220).[10]

The Victorian Canadian imperialist perhaps most influenced by the Carlylean ideas of work and human potential was George Munro Grant; and Grant, in his turn, seems to have been a profound influence on Machar. Grant, of course, was the third principal of Queen's College in Kingston, having succeeded Machar's father, Dr. John Machar, to that position in 1877. Upon his assumption of the Queen's principalship, Grant became part of the "broad circle of acquaintances" with a "shared . . . interest in science and religion," many of them international figures (such as American social gospel leader Lyman Abbot, to whom Roland Graeme is dedicated), that Machar hosted in her capacity as "the well-known author 'Fidelis.'"[11] Indeed, as Brouwer suggests, Grant, Machar's "friend and fellow Presbyterian," was "closer in spirit and nearer at hand than any" in this circle of intellectuals. "Out of the easy communion that existed between [Machar and Grant] as members of the the Kingston and Queen's College communities," adds Brouwer, "the two developed a remarkable body of common interests and a striking affinity and outlook" ("'Between-Age' Christianity" 348).

For Grant, and perhaps even more for Machar, imperialism was an extension of the social gospel idealism that inspired them both; in other words, for them imperialism, while still a nationalist and political movement, was primarily a movement of moral, not political, concern. In fact, Canadian imperialism generally, as we have previously noted, was founded upon a "commitment to conservatism" which held above all "the conviction that moral ideals and values must transcend material considerations." Canadian imperialists could and did, for example, make "extensive use of economic arguments," but these arguments "were [imperialism's] instruments and servants, not its substance." Some imperialists, "like [Colonel George Taylor] Denison and [Andrew] Macphail, . . . felt out of place in a world of capitalism" (Berger, Sense of Power 262-3); others, like Grant, largely held economic and other such "material" motives in contempt and tried to slight them. As Berger says of Grant,

> he had as little regard for the mechanics of imperial federation or political parties as he did for organized differences which divided Christians. It was not these differences which distressed him, but rather the exaggeration of them until men forgot the common aim that they were meant to serve. He dealt with [all differences] . . . in exactly the same fashion. Just as the united church for which he prayed would draw upon varied traditions and harness them to a single cause, similarly the different nations within the empire would work harmoniously for the imperialism of mission. (Sense of Power 33)

Machar, too, as Brouwer has noted, "eschewed an interest in the mechanics of nation- and empire-building" in favour of a "moral nationalism" and imperialism ("Moral Nationalism"

90). Not surprisingly, therefore, Roland Graeme is not an overtly political novel, at least not in the sense of a refined and specific commitment to the prescriptions of a distinct political party or movement.

For example, one of the most remarkable influences that Grant seems to have had upon Machar's writing of Roland Graeme is a very direct and significant one, but it is not, as we shall see, an overtly political one. Reverend Alden, the Minton preacher and Graeme's friend and spiritual mentor, is a barely disguised Reverend Grant, the Kingston preacher, Machar's friend and, it is probably not too strong to suggest, her spiritual mentor. Like Grant (and like both Machar and Graeme, for that matter, too), Alden's heritage is Scottish, which in his estimation, as was it in Grant's,[12] has given him "special advantages" in his development as a minister whose life has been dedicated to the ideal that, in the words of the famous Burns poem which Alden delights to recite, ". . . man to man, the warld o'er,/Shall brithers be, for a' that!" (15). More significantly, Alden has acquired the reputation in Minton, as had Grant in the Queen's College and Kingston communities, as a plain preacher. Unlike Reverend Chillingworth,[13] whose sermons exalt vague and "high Christian ideals" that his hearers have difficulty reconciling with "the details of ordinary life" (132), Alden in his preaching is "plain, downright, unpretentious [and] practical":

> Nobody ever heard Mr. Alden dealing with any abstract "plans" or "systems," or with purely commercial considerations of future "rewards and punishments"; or with a so-called "salvation," uncomprehended as to its real nature, to be procured by a certain vague assent to an equally uncomprehended formula. He gave his people, not scholastic theology, but religion, as he found it in the Bible, warm, concrete, throbbing with the human heart. He showed them the Infinite as he saw Him in every page of the Bible, but especially in the Man of Nazareth; not as the cold, stern, Law-giver . . . but as the infinitely loving--infinitely righteous Father, seeking to raise all His children to their highest possibilities. . . . And he was perpetually seeking, first to call out in the hearts of his people . . . that Infinite Love . . .; and, next, to show how the truth of that response lay in . . . a willing and faithful obedience to the voice of God in duty, in every relation of life, and that duty nothing less than that of "loving our neighbor as ourselves." (110-1)

Alden as preacher seems clearly to be the fictional epitome of what Grant, in Machar's estimation, epitomized in life. "As a preacher [Grant] is marked by simplicity, directness, earnestness, and force," writes Machar in a profile of Grant for readers of The Week; "for 'fine writing' and rhetorical and finished periods he has no admiration, and aims instead at the direct conversational style for which he has the highest of all examples." Moreover, adds Machar, "valuing only that vital religion which is the root of right feeling and right action in daily life, he has no respect for a 'profession' of faith without its fruits" ("Prominent Canadians" 759). Indeed, blending fiction and history for a moment, we might well be able to imagine Alden as a young seminarian at Queen's, absorbing the idealism of the "Queen's spirit" which characterized that institution under Grant's leadership; or imagine Alden in the lecture hall listening to Grant, in the latter's capacity as Professor of Divinity, tell his students "that 'practical preaching' consisted of 'preaching which deals with actual life, inspires to action, and aims at establishing the Kingdom of God on earth'" (Disciplined Intelligence 217); or found Alden listening to Grant on a Sunday, "preach[ing]," as McKillop, who recalls the moment for us, says, "what he taught":

> The Lord calls us to preach the Gospel to the living & to deal with its application to living issues, instead of concerning ourselves with controversies of the past & other dead issues. . . . We are to study the past, that we may understand the principles that were at stake, that we may be warned to avoid the errors of the combatants, & that we may reach the common ground that is generally found to be at the basis of all controversy. Preaching the Gospel does not mean the repetition of doctrinal formulas; but the proclamation of the ever-living message of the love of God to all men, & the application of that message and the spirit which it implies to the ever-changing conditions

> of society. (qtd in Disciplined Intelligence 217)

If Alden is an embodiment of Grant, however, it must be pointed out that he is not an embodiment of Grant the national churchman or of Grant the Christian political statesman. Alden's sphere of moral influence extends from his family only to certain segments of Minton society; Grant's sphere of influence, by contrast, extended nation-wide and even beyond Canada's borders.[14] Machar is careful to stop short of grounding Alden's character, or the novel generally, in the nationalist political ideology of imperialism.

That Machar stopped short of making her novel an overt document or manifesto for ideas of Canadian imperialism can be, of course, very simply explained: the novel, which was published in the same year in both Montreal and New York, was as much destined for an American as for a Canadian market. Indeed, the Americanization of the novel, if we can call it that, has posed a difficulty, an understandable one, perhaps, for readers and critics attempting to place the work within a Canadian context or tradition.

In attempting to place Roland Graeme in a Canadian tradition of "literature of protest," for example, Frank Watt, while he can admit that the novel's brand of "socialist idealism . . . was finding its outlet in the rapid spread of the Knights of Labour movement in Canada in the 1880's and 1890's," has difficulty reconciling that historical fact with the literary fact that "Miss Machar's novel . . . is set in the United States" (477). Carole Gerson, while recognizing *Roland Graeme* as "one of the few Canadian novels of the nineteenth century to acknowledge the existence and debilitating effects of industrialization," nevertheless concludes that "Machar could not bring herself to set the mill town where the [novel's] action occurs in Canada"; Machar seems unwilling or unable, suggests Gerson, to compromise the perception of Canada present in most of the author's other fiction, that is, the perception of Canada as a "rather Arcadian agricultural nation" (233). And Mary Vipond, though she notes parenthetically the influence of Grant upon Machar, concludes that "British and American religious and literary fashions were much more important in forming [Machar's] social gospel ideas than were any Canadian influences"; "little about the novel," she concludes, is "uniquely Canadian" (35).

Both Gerson's and Vipond's comments are not entirely wrong. Vipond's observation that Machar's social gospel ideas were essentially derivative of non-Canadian social gospel writers is an accurate one, even taking into account the influence of Grant. For as Berger says in *A Sense of Power* of the "intellectual content of Grant's version of the social gospel," it "did not depart substantially from that of his American counterparts" (184). In fact, both Machar's and Grant's social gospel idealism seem to have been particularly inspired by the writings of the American social gospel reformer Henry George, whose writings on progress and poverty and on capital and labour, as Berger notes, "had roused the reformist impulse in so many North Americans" (183). Indeed, as Cook has argued in The Regenerators, the influence of George on Canadian social critics and on the Canadian social gospel movement has yet to be fully appreciated. "For a decade [the 1880s] and perhaps longer," says Cook, "Georgeism was as central to the discussion of social questions in Canada as it was in the United States and Great Britain. George's influence on late-Victorian radicalism deserves greater emphasis than it has so far received, partly because Georgeism has too often been made synonymous with the single tax" (110). When, for example, in August of 1884 George spoke at a Hamilton labour rally, he drew, "according to one report, . . . an estimated 10,000 people," labourers and reformers alike, "eager to hear the great man's words" (Cook 107). George's message, notes Cook,

> delivered with typical evangelical fervour, was that despite enormous material progress the world suffered an increasing burden of poverty and distress. The cause and the cure were all George's discovery. "All over the world," he declared, "the private ownership of land has been the great cause of serfdom . . . I hold that an equal right to land is an inalienable

> right that attaches to every human being that comes into the world." How could man's God-given right to the land be restored? By a taxation policy that would give society that unearned increment now pocketed by the landlords. Therefore society, not the landlord, should be the beneficiary of increased land values. True value, George told his readily convinced audience of working people, came from labour, which deserved a full return, and not from land ownership, which, through high rents, caused the oppression of the working classes. (108)

This "single tax" panacea, however, was not all George delivered his audience in Hamilton and audiences elsewhere; in his speeches, as in his books, he also "spoke at great length" and in graphic description "about the inequities and miseries of urban industrial life" and "these sentiments," says Cook, "touched the hearts of a considerable segment of Canada's working-class population because they described the realities of their often miserable lives" (108). Thus, it was not simply the Georgeist cure that made an impact on his Canadian listeners and readers; in fact, that cure, says Cook, was ambiguous, "far from clear in its meaning. Was it merely a taxation policy, or did it mean land nationalization?" (109), George Grant, for example, believed it meant the latter and rejected it; Machar "postpon[ed] final judgment" on it (Cook 190). But both were nevertheless inspired by George. Before his reading of George, Grant, however determined he was "to obliterate the fictitious demarcation between secular and spiritual affairs" (183), was, by his own admission, "thoroughly ignorant of economics and sociology." Following his reading of George, however, by way of which he was introduced to American social gospel ideas, Grant, in his own understated words, was "forced . . . to read more widely & inquire more diligently" (qtd in Berger, Sense of Power 184). As Berger adds, "inquire he did, and in time Grant attained a reputation as one of the foremost Canadian sympathizers with the revival of Christian conscience across the border" (184).

Reading Henry George clearly has left its mark on Machar and her novel, too. There is no denying that Roland Graeme is in places unremittingly didactic, and this didacticism is in no small measure the result of wholesale incorporation into the novel of passages and ideas from George especially and from other figures in the American social gospel movement as well. Mid-novel, for example, Machar includes two speeches at workers meetings, speeches which, as Vipond says, permit Machar to present "her major ideas about the labour question." Vipond continues:

> Roland's talk on "Modern Miracles," climaxed by a long quotation from Henry George, consists mainly of pleas for cooperation and the Brotherhood of Man. The second speech, by an economist, Mr. Jeffrey, is almost entirely based on George. Jeffrey stresses that what society really needs is adherence to

> Christ's precept that every man should love his neighbour as himself. He goes on as well to make various recommendations for reform, including minimum wage and maximum hour legislation, the end of land speculation, equal wages for women, and the regulation of railways and corporations. (34-5)

Indeed, the latter speech is so heavily indebted to American social gospel writers, George particularly, that Machar feels compelled, by way of a footnote, to acknowledge her sources (184). Reading such passages in the novel one cannot help but suspect that the author, like her protagonist, Roland Graeme, "devoured the works of Henry George . . . till . . . the remedies proposed by George and others" brought to her mind "the vision of a fair Utopia which might become the noble aim of modern crusade" (51).

Yet if the particular intellectual content of Machar's and Grant's social gospel idealism is essentially derivative and not uniquely Canadian, the structure which holds those ideas--imperialism--is not derivative and is indeed Canadian. It is important to remember that for both Grant and Machar, as Berger says of the former, the "social gospel was more prophetic of things to come, more an outgrowth of [an imperialistic] world-view, than a direct response to Canadian conditions" (Sense of Power 189). If Machar chose not to set her novel of industrial conflict in Canada, it was not simply, as Gerson suggests, that she could not honestly face the industrialization of Canada, but was rather that the industrialization of Canada was only in its very earliest stages. As Berger observes:

> Though the report of the Royal commission on the relation of Labour and Capital of 1889 had located widespread instances of factory evils, it was not without some justification that Grant noted in 1894 that the grave social problems depicted in American reformist literature were apparent in the Dominion only in their "first beginnings." Even when Grant died in 1902, the forces which were to transform Canada from an agricultural to an industrialized nation were just gathering momentum. In the decade before the World War, however, the phenomenal pace of economic development and its mounting social costs, drew an ever-growing volume or criticism from various segments of the community. (Sense of Power 189)

It was not that Machar and other imperialists of the period were not alive to Canadian social problems--Machar's contributions to the periodicals of the time suggest anything but a lack of interest and concern about such problems--but rather it was that for Machar and the imperialists the myth of Canada as an agrarian nation was still essentially intact and not without basis in reality.

Indeed, the Americanization of Machar's novel is not a refusal to acknowledge immediate Canadian social realities, nor is it a denial of Machar's Canadianism; ironically, in fact, the novel's Americanization is a mark of its Canadianism--it is an indication both of the nature and extent of Machar's imperialism and of the extent to which ideas of Canadian imperialism have been insinuated in the novel. The Americanization of the novel is entirely consistent with perhaps the most fascinating shift in the ideas of Canadian imperialism, the shift, clearly evident "from the mid-1890s onwards" (Berger, Sense of Power 170), in the imperialist attitude towards the American Republic. The early Loyalist conviction that the United States was a moral, social and political "mobocracy," ever threatening the British religious, social and constitutional ideals to which Canada had dedicated herself, gradually gave way, in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century spirit of rapprochement between Great Britain and the United States, to an at first cautious and then interested and even generous admiration of the republic. For "the younger generation of imperialists . . . whose experiences did not run back to the crises of the Civil War years and whose minds where unaffected by the bitter wine of the loyalist legacy," says Berger, vigorous denunciation of the republic was "increasingly irrelevant [and] irresponsible" (Sense of Power 173-4). Moreover, for an imperialist such as Grant, the undeniable leader of this next generation of imperialists, hysterical denigration of the republic was also incompatible with the imperialist idea of mission:

> Believing that every nation had a divine mission to contribute something to the good of humanity, Grant maintained that all Canadian experience pointed to the

> role she must perform in world history. That "divine mission" was to create a British North American nationality which would become a "living link," a permanent bond of union, between Britain and the United States. . . . History and environment had combined to produce a nation evidently designed to function as a "mediator" and Grant looked forward to "a moral reunion of the English-speaking race, a common tribunal and a common citizenship, if not more." (Sense of Power 171)

Machar, as her writing of the period shows, clearly partook of these ideas; moreover, it seems clear, too, that she partook of them by way of Grant. In her profile of Grant for The Week, for example, she warmly notes the "wide and catholic sympathies" of Grant's nationalist and imperialist thought, sympathies which, while insisting upon Canada's need to "[work] out for herself an individual character and destiny of her own," nevertheless also insist upon "grow[ing] up side by side with the neighbouring Republic and in the closest fraternal relations with it." And as a "warm supporter of Imperial Federation," it is Grant's ardent hope, she adds, that the scheme will be a "potent influence," not only for Great Britain and her colonies, but "for the world at large, . . . leading possibly to a still greater Anglo-Saxon federation" ("Prominent Canadians" 758).

Machar's approval of such notions is apparent from other of her contributions to The Week. Reporting on her 1891 travels, or as she puts it, "roamings[,] in classic

Massachusetts," she interjects a lengthy digression, prompted by the inevitable custom house encounter that, as she says, "we had blissfully forgotten" to be a fact of border crossing, "on the anomaly and fatuity of these vexatious barriers between two civilized nations, whose origin, interests and general characteristics are identical, and to both of which the closest and freest commercial relations, in line with the evident intention of nature, could bring . . . nothing but good" ("Roamings," pt. 1, 702). Like Grant, then, Machar held the idea that Canada, as she put it elsewhere, "is destined by nature and geography to trade with the U.S."; moreover, her commitment, like Grant's, to an imperialism which ultimately looked forward to a larger federation of Anglo-Saxon peoples and nations, seems to have led Machar to accept Sir Thomas Farrer's "broad and generous" free trade policy that advocated "unrestricted commercial relations," not only between Canada and the United States, but among all three nations concerned, the United Kingdom included ("Sir Thomas Farrer" 152). And when later in the report to readers of The Week of her journey through Massachusetts, and particularly of her visit to the revolutionary monuments and shrines at Concord and Lexington, Machar reflects:

> Much as we may regret the unhappy breach, and the strife and bitter feeling which it awoke,--much as we may sympathize with the unquenchable loyalty

> of those whose unswerving devotion to the "Old Flag" was the foundation of British Canada--still, if fair-minded, we cannot help admitting that the spirit which conquered Old England then was the very same spirit that her traditions had nourished in New England--the spirit of the grand old rallying cry: "England expects every man to do his duty." ("Roamings," pt. 3, 23)

Such rising, as she herself puts it, "above prejudice" and above "party feeling" (and such antipartyism is yet another attitude she holds in common with Grant and other imperialists[15]) to celebrate a shared ancestry and heritage, although here it has something of the passing tourist's condescension to it, seems to have been sincerely meant by Machar. When, for example, in the mid-1890s the Venezuela-British Guiana territorial dispute threatened the growing rapprochement between the Republic and the Empire, Machar again took to print, and, by way of fragments from a sermon by Lyman Abbot on the matter, suggested that "a[n American] war with England is like civil war." "The spasm of Anglophobia which seemed to seize our nearest neighbours and relations," she concludes, is "already, we may hope, passing away" ("Plea" 445). And when, in 1896, an article appeared in The Week complaining of a history of New England by John Fiske being placed on a University of Toronto student reading list, Machar again responded in support of the spirit of fraternal relations between Canada and the United States, arguing that the history of New England, however revolutionary, was nevertheless "the story of [a] section of our race" that even "the most ultra-loyal Briton should [not] object to" (letter 905).

Given such attitudes and ideas about both the United States and the mission of Canada vis-à-vis the United States, therefore, it should not be entirely surprising or disconcerting to discover Machar to have written a novel about an idealistic Canadian, a Canadian, moreover, with "strong republican sentiments and sympathies" (52), engaged in a crusade to advance his ideals in an American city. Yet, however much Machar and the novel reveal a new sympathy towards the neighbouring republic, that change in attitude should not be misconstrued as a radicalization of ideas. Consistent with the "living link" idea which formed the basis of Grant's perception of Canadian imperialist mission,[16] the new generous attitude was simply another manifestation of the imperialist movement's enduring attempt to connect the old order to the new, to maintain the securities and certainties of the past while nevertheless progressing with a sense of political, social and spiritual power that could determine and shape Canada's and the Empire's future. And, thus, in terms of her ideas of social reform no less than in terms of her political and religious ideas, Machar, as did Grant,[17] steers a careful middle course, between extreme conservatism and extreme liberalism, between science and religion, between progress and preservation, between the rights of the individual and the rights of society, between capital and labour. Like Alden in her novel, who constantly watches over Graeme to prevent the "enthusiastic and generous reformer . . . from rushing into extreme or ill-considered views, however plausible they may at first sight appear," Machar is ever cautious of the "fallacy of any extreme position" (122), and the result, as we have noted earlier, is that Machar is now mostly remembered as a writer who was, in Gerson's words, "inquiring and occasionally esoteric, but always genteel and, ultimately, safe" (Gerson 207).

The conclusion of Roland Graeme: Knight would certainly seem to confirm Gerson's assessment of Machar. Graeme's efforts through the course of the novel help raise the social awareness of a number of the Minton social elite, and upon their discovery of a new purpose in life, they become actively involved in ameliorating the conditions of the poor and advocating better conditions for the worker. More practically, Graeme, almost single-handedly, wins a reduced work-week for women in the Pomeroy textile mill. He earns gains for the men in the mill, too, but not without a struggle. The men go out on strike, and things are at an impasse when a fire breaks out at the mill. Graeme persuades the striking workers that they should help fight the fire. The factory saved, Mr. Pomeroy, in gratitude, gives in to the men's demands. In short, then, as Vipond says, "co-operation and goodwill" rule the day, "but only because of the leadership of an exceptional young middle class male--a 'knight' who has joined the workers because he believes they need 'intelligent help and guidance from within'" (Vipond 35).

Were such an undeniably "safe" termination to the conflicts all there is to the novel's conclusion, the novel's weakness simply would be exposed for all to see clearly. The novel would, moreover, seem to confirm the prevailing critical opinion about writers and their fiction in nineteenth-century Canada, that such novelists seemed "cursed with timidity[,] . . . restrict[ing] their gaze on the more pleasant and superficial aspects of life" (Pacey, Creative Writing 269-70); and that their works were rarely "personal, subjective, or inward searching," few of their fictional characters having had "any quarrel with their world" or having "felt alienated from it" (Roper et al., "Writers" 352).

The conclusion to Machar's novel, however, like the conclusion to DeMille's A Strange Manuscript, is not as straightforward as it might at first appear. The conclusion to the novel may not be entirely successful, but the weaknesses of the conclusion are not entirely obvious or simple, either. Indeed, the weaknesses of the novel's conclusion are as much intellectual or inherent in the ideas that Machar is working with as are they weaknesses of technique or the craft of fiction. The final two chapters of the novel, which complicate the novel's ending, show this inherent weakness. Entitled "In Arcady" and "Looking Forward," these chapters are curiously pastoral: Graeme, temporarily exhausted from his crusade but in the possession of a legacy inherited from his long-time benefactor, Mr. Dunlop, leaves the urban, industrial Minton for the rural, Arcadian village of Rockland where he visits Nora Blanchard and plans for a future that, among other things, includes marriage to Nora. The Arcadian setting and the imminent marriage notwithstanding, however, the novel does not end in unmitigated, buoyant optimism; or, to put it another way, the optimism of the conclusion is qualified in a way which strains or forces it. For, indeed, Graeme's visit to Arcady is really a retreat to Arcady. And it is a much needed retreat, it seems, his earlier crusade not having been the complete success he had intended it to be. For all that he has done to bring the Minton strike to an early conclusion, for example, after the strike Graeme discovers that "'public opinion,' that is, the opinion of the upper stratum of Minton intelligence, was decidedly 'down' on [him] and his troublesome organ" (211) and as a result he is forced to stop publication of The Brotherhood. Moreover, for all that he has tried to help the Minton worker, not only materially but also morally and intellectually, after the strike's settlement Graeme is

> pained by frequently encountering precisely the same spirit of selfishness in the employed that had so disgusted him in the employers; and when, occasionally, his friends, the "Knights," had a social entertainment of their own, his taste was jarred by the tone of the comic songs and recitations which seemed most to tickle the audience. (214)

Add to these sobering reflections ones that accompany the attempted suicide of one friend, the abandonment of Graeme by another, and the death of Reverend Alden's saintly young daughter, Grace, and Graeme's disillusionment, in spite of all he has achieved, makes escape from Minton and reevaluation of his idealism almost inevitable. His spirits "jaded" and his nerves "overtaxed" (272), he makes his way to Rockland.

The sobering or chastening of Roland Graeme which takes place at the novel's end is, of course, another example of the caution that Machar regularly interjects into the novel and that throughout tempers her idealism. Through his experiences, Graeme learns, as he admits to Nora while in Rockland, that "the mills of God grind slowly" and that he had "been too much in a hurry for results that _must_ take time to bring about" (284). Graeme, of course, is not permanently disillusioned. The pastoral Rockland, in contrast to Minton, is a model mill town, its factory buildings surrounded by the "neat white cottages of the _employés_" (276) which, in turn, are surrounded by "wooded hills" and placid lakes; and in that appropriate setting Graeme is rejuvenated and plans a future that, he hopes, will see him attempt to revive The Brotherhood and set up an experimental cooperative factory in Minton and, ultimately, will see him in the vocation of "'a preacher,' of Alden's sort" (283). However, Machar's symbolic romantic insistence upon an Edenic future that marries "the machine and the garden,"[18] and her insistence that Graeme will carry on his quest for social justice and spiritual happiness in support of this future, cannot completely dispel the caution which inevitably accompanies the idealism. For all his future plans, Graeme, as Gerson says, "has modified his aims from initiating a Golden Age of fraternal cooperation to working on behalf of the Eight Hours Movement" (Gerson 234-5).

The strained or forced optimism of the the novel's conclusion, the sentimentalized and romanticized idealism awkwardly superimposed upon the cautious, even cynical, recognition of the sobering facts of reality, should not entirely surprise us. Graeme's retreat from Minton reality to the "vernal woods" of Rockland is also Machar's retreat, a retreat essentially no different from retreats we have seen repeatedly in Machar's thought. As McKillop has observed in A Disciplined Intelligence, along with the Hegelian idealism that characterized the Anglo-Canadian mind in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries came both "sadness and joy." The period's attempt to "reassert the moral and religious dimension of life which had been undermined by modern skepticism" (215), an attempt which, in practical terms of social reform, meant "the obliteration of the secularism of society" (218), came at a cost because, as McKillop says,

> the method of doing so--Objective Idealism--resulted ultimately in a form of belief that bore a distinct resemblance to the declared enemy, evolutionary naturalism. Both accepted the principle of evolutionary change; both asserted the fundamental unity of nature. This convergence between Hegelian idealism and the new naturalism, John Passmore has argued, was one of the most important and distinctive results of Darwin's impact on British metaphysics. "It has been said," Passmore concludes, "that pantheism is a polite form of atheism: to assert that everything is a God is certainly to deny that there is a God, as that word is ordinarily understood. And similarly one cannot but be struck by the resemblances between naturalism and . . . Absolute Idealism: so concerned are [Idealist philosophers] to insist that there is nowhere a gap between the human and the natural, that one is often inclined to say-- Absolute Idealism is the polite form of naturalism."[19]

Machar, as we have seen, fights hard against the determinism inherent in ideas of social Darwinism; she seems ever conscious of the denial of God that such ideas seem to enjoin. And in the attempt to forestall such determinism, we have seen as well that, while at times she follows Grant and other social gospellers in the attempt to obliterate the dualistic "distinction between the sacred and the secular, the spiritual and the material, and to make a radical separation of theological creeds and ethical conduct" (McKillop, Disciplined Intelligence 218), Machar nevertheless retains an essentially dualistic view that can never fully reconcile the secular and the sacred.

Hence, indeed, the awkward and strained mix of the novel's conclusion. Graeme's parting thoughts are revealing in this regard. Having shortly before, in the midst of the "marvellous beauty of the summer landscape" in Rockland, experienced a romantic religious epiphany--"he felt the divine Father and Saviour, the brooding Spirit of love and strength, closer and more real than the lovely vision around him" (272)--Graeme tells Nora what his experiences have taught him:

> Oh, yes, I've learned that lesson [that social reform will not "bring perfection and happiness, alone"]. . . . I know that Law is not Love, nor knowledge of right, alone, the power to reach it. I know, too, that, as Mr. Alden so often says, there's only one thing that can set this poor world right, and that is, the growth of brother-love! And that must come from the Source of Love. Yet, we must all help, as far as we can. I take comfort in a thought found in my Thoreau--"The universe constantly and obediently answers to our conceptions; whether we travel fast or slow, the track is laid for us. Let us spend our lives in conceiving them. . . ." (285)

Fresh from the lesson which the material world has taught Graeme, that man will not inevitably set the world right, Graeme and Machar unwittingly retreat into the hands of the an enemy, ironically, no less uncertain and deterministic, an enemy that is a curious and contradictory mix of transcendentalism and romantic pantheism--suggesting an ideal essentially unreachable in the material terms or at best intuitively perceived in nature--and evolutionary determinism--a trust that the ideal, or God, will also be revealed directly in the the material world, guiding the affairs of men in the course of "brother-love."

Machar's faith in God to direct all this is, of course, her only assurance of man's moral and spiritual development. However, such faith and assurance as her writing reveals, secure as she must have believed it to be, show clear signs of the eroding marks left on Canadian Christianity as the social gospel moved through the first decades of the twentieth century. Machar's God here is not so much the God of Christian doctrine and orthodoxy, the God of Christ crucified, dead, buried and resurrected in divine atonement for man's sin--God transcendent, in other words. Rather, he is a more vaguely defined "brooding Spirit" or "Source of love," revealed not mostly or most completely in scripture but instead in nature or in the course of human social progress--God "immanen[t] in the world" (Cook 5), in other words. Machar, thus, is on the way to the gradual de-deification of Christianity which took place early in the new century and the roots of which, as our study of De Mille has shown, can be traced back to the middle of the previous century. She, then, can be seen to prepare the way for a generation of social reformers, led in Canada by Salem Bland, for whom Christianity became "a religion largely shorn of traditional doctrine and based on an organic and progressive evolution of society" (McKillop, Disciplined Intelligence 221). Painful as likely it would have been to Machar to know this, her thought, in its overwhelming desire to unite man and God, shows already the willingness, in McKillop's words, "to scrap much [,] . . . the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, Original Sin, Atonement, Eternal Life, the Resurrection" (Disciplined Intelligence 215), to achieve its end. The de-emphasis or elimination of such traditional orthodxy in Machar's thought and work shows the sad but "supreme irony," as Cook calls it, "of the [social gospel] regenerators . . . [,] that the new birth to which they contributed was not, as they had hoped, the city of God on earth but rather the secular city" (4). Thus, odd as it may seem to us, especially to those of us for whom Machar appears to be a naive, genteel Victorian whose ideas are an ineffectual throwback to an era long since past, Machar's work, in showing such signs, represents the first small step towards the secular social structure which defines Canada today.[20]

CHAPTER 4

ROBERT BARR: IMPERIALISM, PROGRESS, AND THE NEW CENTURY

If Wilfrid Laurier ever wanted support for his bold contention, made before a 1904 audience of the Canadian Club in Ottawa, that the twentieth century would belong to Canada, he received it from what may seem to be an unlikely quarter: the year following Laurier's famous address, Robert Barr, Canadian expatriate and then editor of the fashionable London literary magazine The Idler, braved the no-less-bold prediction, on the pages of his magazine, "that Canada will become the chief manufacturing nation of the world, as well as the chief wheat-producing nation, and will therefore be in time the most prosperous of all countries."[1] That the editor of a British monthly should hazard such a prediction about a British colony is not, of course, surprising: by definition British imperialism was hardly the exclusive ideological or political property of zealous Canadian nationalists. What may surprise, however, is the prophet (or, perhaps rather, the prophet's reputation): in Canada, Robert Barr is now almost solely remembered for his colourful condemnation of Canadian literary backwardness and philistinism in the essay--oftreprinted since--"Literature in Canada";[2] or he is remembered for one comment--oft-quoted since--made in that essay, the wry observation that Canadians would rather spend money "on whiskey than on books" (pt.1, 5). Written after Barr had already earned a literary popularity outside of Canada, the essay was published in an 1899 issue of The Canadian Magazine and developed a prophet-without-honour theme that was based on Barr's own experiences: largely frustrated in his efforts to be published in Canada, Barr had been forced abroad, first to Detroit, where he earned recognition as a journalist and as a short story writer, and then to London, where he secured his literary reputation with successes as an editor and as a novelist.

Pecuniary pressures may have made Barr, literally, turn his back on Canada; however, as his Laurieresque celebration of Canada's future greatness suggests--and it was but one of several such editorial essays in The Idler--in other respects Barr kept Canada well in mind. It is true, of course, that of his twenty novels, only two--In the Midst of Alarms (1894), a mock-heroic account of the Canadian rebuff of the 1866 Fenian raiders, and The Measure of the Rule (1907), Barr's best novel, a satiric account of student life in the Toronto Normal School--are explicitly Canadian in setting and subject matter. It is also true, however, that if Barr is ever to be widely recognized as a serious novelist, such recognition must depend largely on those two

Canadian works with the addition of only two other serious works--The Mutable Many (1896), a story of a London strike and an analysis of late-Victorian British class struggle, and The Victors (1901), a stinging satire of American business and political life--both of which, though not overtly Canadian, nevertheless show, in ideas and outlook, clear signs of the author's twenty-two formative years in Canada. (Barr's remaining sixteen novels, mystery and romance-adventure stories, mostly, represent the stock-in-trade which Barr offered a reading public that regularly insisted he remain true to his early success as a writer of popular fiction.)[3]

If, therefore, Barr's famous (or infamous) essay on Canadian literary culture seems to have secured for him a place in Canadian literature as only, or at best, a could-have-been Canadian writer, it is certainly not a place or reputation that he deserves: the analysis of Barr's best fiction within its historical and intellectual context clearly reveals a Canadian writer, and a writer, moreover, of considerable ability and of significant insight. Indeed, unlike the writing of both James De Mille and Agnes Maule Machar, writing that is bound closely--too closely, at times we suspect--to its immediate context, Barr's serious fiction affords us (as it afforded him) the opportunity to see Victorian Canadian ideas and concerns reflected some distance from their origin and refracted through other milieus. Like other Canadian writers expatriated for significant periods of their lives, both of his generation (Sara Jeannette Duncan and Grant Allen, for example) and of subsequent generations (Morley Callaghan and Mavis Gallant, for example), Barr attains an insight and perspective which, Canadian as it is, is more truly international or cosmopolitan in spirit and scope than other Canadian writers are able to achieve.

Barr, in fact, led a varied international life that took him from his birthplace in Scotland, to rural Ontario and later to Toronto, to Detroit and to other major American centres, to England and to the literary life of London, and, after settling in Britain, in travels to Algeria, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, and elsewhere, interspersed by many return visits to North America. Not surprisingly, therefore, Barr's writing reveals an eclectic mix of interests and influences. But beneath the Edwardian urbanity of the London editor and literary man that mostly seems to characterize him, two strains or forces dominate, both of which largely appear to have their origin in his Canadian life and experience. Often, Barr appears decidedly conservative, at times jingoistic even, his hailing of the Empire's greatness, for example, and especially of Canada's place in the Imperial future, straining his urbanity. Yet Barr was never the complete Tory, however loudly at times he may have proclaimed imperialism's cause. His conservative idealism frequently could be seen to wane in the attraction of the other dominant force in his life, liberalism. A pragmatist by nature, and having himself struggled opportunistically to fame and fortune out of what he perceived was the relative poverty and parochialism of his life in provincial Canada, he frequently espoused the individualist self-help ethic and championed the cause of capitalist progress. And the pull of these contrary forces became for Barr, as did they for De Mille and Machar before him, both the source of strength and cause of weakness in his writing, providing it with a complex vitality but giving it also a hazardous instability which at times played havoc with his craft.

The kind and quality of Barr's conservatism and imperialism can be measured, as can it be measured in the cases of De Mille and Machar, by the nature and degree of his concern regarding the great republic to Canada's south. On the surface, Barr in this regard seems to have had more in common with De Mille and the first-generation imperialists (such as Colonel George Taylor Denison, Charles Mair, and others of the Canada First movement) than with Machar and the turn-of-the century imperialists (such as George Grant and George Parkin): Barr's apparent anti-Americanism was at times nearly virulent, and grave indeed seemed to be his concern for the Imperial future in the face of the American threat. Canada in his estimation was under direct assault by Americans, who, he repeatedly warned his Idler audience, "are pouring across the border in double the number that comes from Britain" ("And What Good" 387). Barr's concern was twofold: he feared American domination of Canada, and he feared the importation of tainted values that would inevitably accompany the "invasion of Canada" by American investment capital and immigrants (editorial, Nov. 1902, 250).[4] Barr certainly shared the view of other imperialists of his kind, that "the most conspicuous characteristic of American society was instability and the loosening of social ties under the impact of industrialization [and] urbanization" (Berger, Sense of Power 160). Barr's view of America, then, was in part informed by imperialist ideology, and by popular imperialist stereotype and mythology. Yet it was also in part informed by his direct experience of the republic, during his years as a journalist for the Detroit Free Press (1876-1881), and, following his move to Britain in 1881, in his many return visits to America. Unlike some imperialists, particularly the early imperialists, whose anti-American virulence at times seems to suggest, as S. F. Wise has said of early eighteenth-century Loyalists and their views of the republic, that they viewed America "only through the chinks in an extremely constricting ideology" (Canada 22), Barr's view of America shows, if not always a completely realistic portrayal of American life, at least close familiarity with it. And that familiarity did not mean, as presently will become evident, complete antipathy to American culture and values; by the same token, however, it did not mean acceptance either. Indeed, given Barr's imperialism and given also Barr's close familiarity with what American historian Robert H. Wiebe has called the "distended society" of turn-of-the-century America, Barr's writing on America, writing that can be lightly satirical at some times, earnestly serious at others, shows a curious combination of imperialist ideology and American social criticism (and, in places, social realism). In fact, although an imperialist with a life-long attachment to Canada, Barr in a number of respects also belongs in the "muckraking tradition" of early twentieth-century American literature: in both his journalism and his fiction Barr frequently seeks to expose, primarily to a growing middle-class British and North American reading public, the "brutality" of American life (39), as Wiebe has called it--the "coarse leadership and crudely exercised power" (37), "the bribery and extortion," which "permeated" both American business and American politics (39). And when such attempts at muckraking are combined with ideas of imperialism, the result is a fear, even a paranoia, that American economic power and moral influence are beginning to constitute a new and ominous imperialism.

The Idler's promise to remain light and apolitical was often broken by its editor, but rarely more emphatically than when, in a series of 1905 articles called "Frenzied Finance," a deadly serious Barr warned Britons of "the most gigantic and far-reaching Trust the world has yet seen." If any of his readers, like so many--too many--Americans, were taken in by the American "cult of the millionaires" (Wiebe 38)--the uncritical adulation of American financial wizards, the Carnegies, Vanderbilts and Rockefellers--Barr was prepared to disprize them of their illusions and to explain upon whose backs American monopolists had made their fortunes. Taking his cue from the British Liberals' election campaign slogan, "Your food will cost you more," Barr wryly observed that neither Liberals nor Conservatives could do much about British food prices. It is under the heel of J. Ogden Armour, Chicago Beef Trust monopolist, warned Barr, that "the neck of England reposes": "There is the man who will say whether or not your food will cost more, just as John D. Rockefeller announces to you the amount you must pay for illuminating or lubricating oil, or petrol." And if Britons thought that the imperial connection with Canada might be a way around American combines, Barr went on, it was likely too late:

> Mr. Armour possesses now a complete monopoly over fresh and salted meat, over fertilisers, bone-products, hides, articles made from horn, bristles, fresh

> fruit, and various other things. . . . On wheat, Indian corn, oats, barley, and other grain Mr. Armour's monopoly is nearly completed. . . . Perhaps you think you can circumvent him by getting your wheat and flour from Canada. Read the Act now under discussion by the United States Legislature, giving a rebate of 99 per cent. on every bushel of wheat brought from Canada to be exported to Great Britain. While Great Britain is discussing the question whether Canada offers us anything or not, Mr. Armour will have made his offer to the Dominion, and paid cash. When you cable to Canada in the name of Imperialism to send you cheap wheat. . . . Canada will say:--
>
> "We're very sorry, but we must refer you to Mr. J. Ogden Armour, of Chicago, an extremely nice young man, who pays cash down, and doesn't discuss fiscal questions." ("Frenzied Finance," pt. 2, 38)

The cynical tone and bleak conclusions of this piece show Barr the would-be realist, intent upon understanding (even if, in its paranoia, such understanding falls short) the _realpolitik_ of twentieth-century international economic affairs.

In other _Idler_ pieces, however, Barr, less the realist, combined the exaggerated stereotype of the frantic American hustler with other imperialist mythology to warn of the American threat. In a 1902 series of pieces, for example, Barr predicted, in all seriousness, it seems, the imminent decline of America, a decline already well in progress, he believed, and one which explained the increasing migration of Americans northward. His prediction, moreover, exploited Canadian imperialist notions, slightly varied, of the character-forming effects of weather, and in particular, the idea that, as Carl Berger has noted it, the northern climate made for a "self-relian[t], health[y]" people, whereas the southern climate made for people who were "stagnant, unprogressive" and "deficient in hardihood" (Sense of Power 129-30). Barr first of all described for his readers the American climate, by which he meant, it seems, both moral climate and weather in curious combination. The American, he began,

> is doomed to burn up--I mean in this world. His climate would be all right taken by itself. His energy would be all right taken by itself. But the combination is deadly. If you charge an inverted bell with oxygen and place a mouse within the fluid, you will see for a few moments a wonderful display of activity. The mouse will be all over the place . . . , but by and by he turns up his toes and is with us no longer. Such is the fate that overshadows America. A hundred years from now it will be a pastoral country, the relaxation of stolid farmers being excursions to gaunt and tottering ruins of New York and Chicago. (editorial, Idler Oct. 1902, 125)

In the following issue he continued his prediction, describing "two methods of escape by which the Yankees can flee from impending doom":

> If they move south into Mexico they will live a life of langorous [sic] ease, untroubled by thoughts of trusts or money making. On the other hand, if they move north into Canada they acquire the most delightful and healthful climate in the world. No one ever libelled the climate of Canada except British writers. . . . The only fault I ever found with the climate of Canada is that the Christmas and New Year festivities are sometimes interrupted by sunstroke. I see that up to thirty thousand American citizens moved into Canada. I wish now that I had not given them warning, because I anticipate a stampede . . . which may . . . overwhelm the Dominion, unless it speedily puts a prohibitive tariff on the energetic American. (editorial, Idler Nov. 1902, 250)

The nervous humour that concludes his comments only belies his fear, stated more earnestly in the third and final piece in the series, that, given the steadily growing "invasion of Canada," "there will arise an interesting crisis in the political affairs of the Dominion, for Canada has the freest laws of any nation on earth, and the majority rules in reality, as well as in theory" (editorial, Idler Mar. 1903, 759). Barr, of course, was not alone in his attitude and fear. He, with other imperialists, might boast, as the Canadian Methodist Magazine once did, "we have the freest institutions and most direct self-government in the world. . . . [, w]e are free from many of the social cancers which are empoisoning the national life of our neighbours" ("Annexation" 188); but Canada's future, according to many imperialists, Barr included, was still tenuous. That future, as Wilfred Campbell phrased it before an audience of the Empire Club of Canada, was either "Imperialism or Imperialism," either "that of Britain [or] that of the Imperial Commonwealth to the south" (qtd in Berger, Sense of Power 170).

Most often in his critique of the republic, however, Barr maintained the humourous persona that was, perhaps, more natural to him and which doubtless helped appease a public and critics who, as he himself observed, urged that he "cease endeavouring to instruct" (and that, as far as his fiction was concerned, he forego the temptation to "issue great novels" [editorial, Idler Oct. 1902, 122-3]). In his Idler pieces, Barr mostly made use of the satirical humour gained by way of exaggerated stereotypes of the American, a method more in keeping, even when the satire was pointed, with the periodical's reputation as a magazine of idle repartee and leisurely reading. "Competition is so strenuous in the States," he observed in one "Idler's Club" editorial essay, for example, "that I expect within ten years time sleep will have been abolished from the land. In future American babies will be born wide awake and will never close their eyes until the closing is final" ("Oasis" 110). In the same vein, Barr, in another Idler issue, encouraged his readers, "be kind to the American when you meet him": do not "hesitate to entertain a Western millionaire when he crosses your path. It is not an expensive thing to do, as you might imagine." Acquaintance "with fourteen trans-Atlantic millionaires," he went on, had already shown him that the poor rich American is usually so run down from his constant business that

> his luncheon is usually a glass of milk, a little Vichy, and a thin slice of brown bread and butter. He rarely ventures on anything as strong as undiluted milk. He is always in process of taking a cure of some sort, and is optimistic in believing that a few weeks' rest will put him on his feet again. He is going to quit business for a month or two he says, but cable dispatches follow him wherever he goes. (editorial, Idler Oct. 1902, 125)

In his fiction, too, Barr made use of the exaggerated type of the American, and did so in a way, moreover, which suggests conscious writing in the humourous-satiric tradition of Thomas Haliburton, whose work Barr knew and admired.[5] In the Midst of Alarms, Barr's first novel (but published, as were all his novels, well after his move to England in 1881) shows Barr most completely in that tradition. Like Haliburton's Sam Slick sketches, Barr's novel comments, also by way of a travelling (or in this case, vacationing) Yankee, on the American character and culture. But like the Haliburton sketches, too, the novel also comments on the Canadian character and culture, and comments in a way, moreover, that requires us to qualify what seems to be, judging from The Idler pieces, Barr's unqualified scorn of the American character and culture. The novel has a pair of protagonists, two former friends, Professor Stillson Renmark, of University College, Toronto, and Dick Yates, a Canadian-born New York journalist, who reunite after many years for a two week camping holiday in the Canadian woods just over the border from Buffalo. It is the brash and bumptious Yates, of course, who, despite his Canadian origin, is the comic type of the arrogant, go-ahead American--"hustling [and] wide-awake" (C. Stan Allen 548), one contemporary reviewer generously described him--a man who clearly embodies those traits and values that to Barr, as his Idler writings confirm, show the busy hollowness of American life and culture. Like the caricatures of the American in The Idler, Yates is so consumed with his career that his health has been affected. Indeed, it is precisely for this reason that he has arranged the camping vacation. As one of America's most successful newspapermen--he has interviewed senators and presidents, and better yet, the biggest American tycoons, and rarely has he been scooped--he has so overworked himself that, when ordered by his doctors to get away from civilization, preferably with some companion--"some man with no brains, if possible, who will not discuss politics, who has no opinion on anything that any sane man would care to talk about, and who couldn't think of a bright thing to say if he tried for a year"

(21)--he instantly thinks of Canada and of the Canadian professor. For if Yates is the type of the American live-wire, Professor Renmark is also a type, and a not entirely flattering one, of the dull, ineffectual, unimaginative Canadian; however well educated he may be, he is, as Renmark admits about himself, a "plodd[er]," "not any great success," a man "in no danger of becoming rich" (15).

The novel's fictional caricatures of Canadians, too, then, take the form of such gently satiric types. Yet Renmark is not the only Canadian in the novel; he is the novel's only urban Canadian (whose specific type he may then be, perhaps), but it is the novel's colourful assortment of rural Canadians which perhaps best conveys Barr's estimation of the Canadian character. And those rural Canadians, unlike the rural Maritime Canadians in the Sam Slick tales, are not easily gulled by American worldliness. The American in Barr's novel may be supremely arrogant regarding his land's greatness and the Canadian nation's backwardness; he may be of the attitude of the Buffalo hotel clerk upon hearing rumour of the "Fenian snap" along the Canada-United States border: "I wouldn't have Canada as a gift, let alone fight for it. I've been there" (9). But the Canadian in Barr's comic world has a fierce loyalty and national pride all his own. Old Hiram Bartlett is typical of the rural Canadian that Yates meets. A "most cantankerous crank," Bartlett "hates Yankees like poison" and is arrogantly content in the knowledge that Americans "got thrashed out of [their] boots" (29) in the War of 1812. When Yates attempts to encourage Bartlett (and it requires fisticuffs to do so) "to take a broader view of history," and to "study up on the War of the Revolution a bit" (40), Bartlett is deeply troubled:

> At last [Bartlett] said abruptly to the professor:
>
> "What's this Revolution he [Yates] talked about?"
>
> "It was the War of Independence, beginning in 1776."
>
> "Never heard of it. Did the Yanks fight us?"
>
> "The colonies fought with England."
>
> "What colonies?"
>
> "The country now called the United States."
>
> "They fought with England, eh? Which licked?"
>
> "The colonies won their independence."
>
> "That means they licked us. I don't believe a word of it. 'Pears to me I'd 'a' heard of it; fur I've lived in these parts a long time."
>
> "It was a little before your day."
>
> "So was 1812; but my father fit in it, an' I never heard him tell of this Revolution. He'd 'a' known, I sh'd think. There's a nigger in the fence somewheres."
>
> "Well, England was rather busy at the time with the French."
>
> "Ah, that was it, was it? I'll bet England never knew the Revolution was a-goin' on till it was over. Old Napoleon couldn't thrash 'em, and it don't stand to reason that the Yanks could. I thought there was some skullduggery. Why, it took the Yanks four years to lick themselves." (41-2)

Hiram Bartlett's (and, by extension, the Canadian imperialists') agility in historical revisionism, his blind loyalty to Empire, seem to be a strength of character. Barr, in fact, seems quite prepared to let his novel contribute, in its own humourous way, to the "loyalist cult" and the "myth of 1812" which, as Carl Berger says, "fully flowered" in Canada in the latter decades of the nineteenth century (*Sense of Power* 90). When, at the novel's conclusion, for example, the township finds itself in the midst of the Battle of Ridgeway, Barr, who himself had served in the St. Thomas Volunteers that had been organized to repel the 1866 Fenian raiders,[6] is apparently intent upon celebrating the Canadian loyalty and self-reliance that drives off the Fenians. The Canadian forces show a bravery and determination that makes the outcome seem inevitable. In fact, even Professor Renmark, the pedantic, stodgy, unimaginative, and unadventurous representative of urban Canada is heroically transformed into an outraged and fiery patriot (and is nearly killed for it). General O'Neil's Fenian troop, by contrast, is depicted in the novel as a kind of Falstaff's army, a bumbling brigade of, as Renmark tells the general to his face, "the worst looking . . . vagabonds I have ever seen out of jail" (206). Indeed, in Barr's re-creation of it, the Battle of Ridgeway is 1812 all over again, complete with the "idea that," as Berger describes the long-standing loyalist myth of 1812, "the yeoman militia and not the regular British forces proved the backbone of the defense of Upper Canada" (Sense of Power 90-1). The volunteers, "invariably underrated by men of experience in military matters," says Barr, "fought well" and "gallantly responded" to the command of the British commander, "but against stupidity the gods are powerless" (263). The incompetence of the British commander and regulars result in six deaths, one missing, and many wounded on the Canadian side, and although the Canadians are ultimately victorious and push the Fenians back, "if the affair had been left in [the] hands" of the the volunteers, suggests Barr, "the result might have been different" (262).

On the other hand, however, Barr's distance in time and place from the characters, scene and events of In the Midst of Alarms permits the author another--truer--perspective, too. To those involved at the time, the Battle of Ridgeway may have seemed a major international conflagration; and to imperialists intent upon inspiring in Canadians a nationalist pride in history, the significance of such an event could, perhaps, "only be rendered," as Berger says of the significance with which imperialists invested Queenston Heights before it, "in the analogies of antiquity--Thermopylae, Marathon, Salamis" (Sense of Power 91). To Barr, however, "the result of the struggle was similar in effect to an American railway accident of the first class" (262). "This farce . . . known as the Battle of Ridgeway

. . . would have been comical had it not been for the death that hovered over it," he concludes (adding, moreover, that "the comedy, without the tragedy, was enacted a day or two before at a bloodless skirmish which took place near a hamlet called Waterloo, which affray is dignified in Canadian annals as the second battle of that name" [263]).

Not only, indeed, are the Fenian skirmishes which conclude the novel treated mock-heroically (from the perspective of both sides of the conflict), but, moreover, the entire clash and conflict throughout the novel of Canadian and American character and culture, high-serious though it may be to the combatants on each side, is gently mocked and invested with less-than-heroic import. Old Hiram Bartlett and the other backwoods Canadians may embody a kind of traditional agrarian strength, self-reliance and fierce loyalty which Barr genuinely admires, particularly in the face of late-Victorian urbanization and progress, but they are also little more than nostalgic reminders of an era quickly passing; they, and the virtues they represent, Barr suggests in the novel, are largely destined to be lost in the inevitable march of progress and civilization.[7] And Yates, however much he may embody worrisome signs of the failings of progressive American life and culture, nevertheless also embodies the spirit and vitality essential for success in a progressive new world. If In the Midst of Alarms is Barr's attempt at a fictional reconciliation of the conflicting values and claims of a traditional, agrarian Canadian society and a modern, progressive American culture, the novel does not really or seriously achieve it; yet in its humourously poignant and honest way the novel does suggest the confused feeling and uncertain thought that accompanies the attempt. A rueful conversation between Yates and Remark midway through the book perhaps shows this. The conversation begins with Yates's reflections on old Hiram and the backwoods culture to which he belongs:

> "The farmer has nobody to please but himself. That adds to his independence. . . . These people know how to make what they want, and what they can't they do without. That's the way to form a great nation. You raise, in this manner, a self-sustaining, resolute, unconquerable people. The reason the North conquered the South was because we drew our armies mostly from self-reliant farming class, while we had to fight a people accustomed for generations to having things done for them."
>
> "Why don't you buy a farm, Yates?"
>
> "Several reasons. I am spoiled for life here. I am like the drunkard who admires a temperate life, yet can't pass a ginshop. The city virus is in my blood. And then, perhaps, after all, I am not quite satisfied with the tendency of farm life; it is unfortunately in a transition state. It is at the frame-house stage, and will soon blossom into the red-brick stage. The log-house era is what I yearn for. . . . The old way was the best way, Renny, my boy. The farmer's son won't be as happy in the brick-house which the mason will build for him as his grand-father was in the log-house he built for himself. And

> fools call this change the advance of civilisation."
>
> "There is something to be said for the old order of things," admitted Renmark. "If a person could unite the advantages of what we call civilisation with the advantages of a pastoral life, he would inaugurate a condition of things that would be truly idyllic."
>
> "That's so, Renmark, that's so!" cried Yates enthusiastically. "A brownstone mansion on Fifth Avenue, and a log hut on the shores of Lake Superior! That would suit me down to the ground. Spend half a year in each place."
>
> "Yes," said the professor meditatively; "a log hut on the rocks and under the trees, with the lake in front, would be very nice if the hut had a good library attached."
>
> "And a daily paper. Don't forget the press."
>
> "No. I draw the line there. The daily paper would mean the daily steamer and the daily train. . . ."
>
> Yates sighed. "I forgot about the drawback," he said. "That's the trouble with civilisation. You can't have the things you want without bringing in the trail of so many things you don't want." (108-10)

Yates and Renmark's reflections here perhaps best represent Barr's mind. For all his vociferous concern and condemnation in The Idler of American materialism, urbanization and economic imperialism, Barr himself, like Yates, is addicted to those very values that one part of him fears and perhaps even detests; he, like Yates, "is spoiled" for an idealized life completely in the past; he, like Yates, cannot escape the realistic conclusion that progress is inevitable and comes intermixed with change good and bad, wanted and unwanted.

The waning idealism and attraction to progress that together form one part of Barr's thought and writing were as much a consequence of late Victorian age as were they a consequence of the author's cosmopolitan life and perspective. Already evident by the turn of the century were early signs of idealism's impending demise, a demise which, as McKillop has suggested, would follow from the emergence, in the period of the First World War and after, of a generation "of Canadian thinkers who had little use for the sentimental and idealistic musings of the generation of the 1890s" (Disciplined Intelligence 230). In the United States, the end of idealism, and especially of the idealism of the more fervent (and Christian) social gospel reformers or utopianists, was already augured following the watershed election of 1896.[8] With the defeat of the Populist Democrat William Jennings Bryan, the reform movement lost much of its energy. Social gospel writer Edward Bellamy, whose novel Looking Backward had inspired a generation of reformers to the cause of Christ's kingdom on earth, "failed to stir the nation with a sequel," says Wiebe, and the celebrated American social gospel reformer "Josiah Strong, who had once likened the end of the nineteenth century to the time of Christ's birth, now contemplated the twentieth century with vapid optimism" (105). Idealism's decline, says

S. E. D. Shortt in *The Search for an Ideal*, was "a reflection of the emergence of an urban industrial society which placed a premium on planning and cost benefit analysis rather than metaphysical declarations" (144-5). In Canada, according to Shortt, a clear "sign of impending defeat" of idealism

> was the ease with which the empiricists posed debates in their own terms. This was the striking irony, for example, of the idealist defense of the classics. Their position was lost when they attempted to prove that a knowledge of Greek equipped a young man for the world of business as well, if not better, than a command of mathematics. By stressing relevance and practicality as the points at issue, the empiricists were easy victors. (145)

The postulate that empiricism and a utilitarian ethic were, to use Shortt's words, "better equipped for survival in twentieth-century society" (139) than was idealism is one to which Barr, largely, though not unequivocally, would have agreed. Qualified agreement with the idea, for example, is implied in *The Measure of the Rule*, Barr's most ambitious novel and the one which shows his most significant literary attempt to re-create and reconcile the warring tensions of his life, mind, and times. A largely autobiographical return to the formative years of the author's early adulthood in Canada, the novel dramatizes the utilitarian, progressivist spirit or ethic in conflict with a staid, conservative Canadian establishment that is not yet prepared to meet the new century and its new ideas. The novel, moreover, has education as its subject and thus the conflict between old and new in the novel often takes the form of the very debate--between classical learning and modern applied knowledge--that Shortt's study of the period suggests is a telling mark of the period's waning idealism.

The theme of learning or knowledge in the service of opportunity or progress is suggested from the novel's outset, which introduces the reader to Tom Prentiss, the novel's narrator and protagonist (and the novelist's second self, not only in attitudes and perceptions but also, because of the book's autobiographical nature, in circumstances[9]). Raised in rural Ontario, Prentiss, now twenty-three years old and coming to the end of a temporary term as a rural school teacher in the region, is on the verge of a change in careers. Tired of his years "spent first in the labour of tilling a backwoods farm [, and] second, in the labour of teaching a backwoods school" (2), Prentiss has been "determined in [the] three years covered by [his temporary] teacher's certificate to save enough money to enable [him] to grapple with a college." Determined, too, upon a "future [that] lay along one of two paths [,] mathematics [or] science" (3), a chance encounter with a civil engineer performing advance survey work for a railway line in the region helps him settle on a career.

The engineer recites passages from Twain's The Innocents Abroad for Prentiss, who promptly resolves "to buy this book by an author who," Prentiss reflects, "seemed to have touched on several points overlooked by my ancient comrade, Euclid." Such sophistication and erudition as he has never seen certainly leaves its mark upon the young backwoods teacher. More importantly, however, the engineer's salary--"the sum seemed incredible in its hugeness"--impresses Prentiss, so much so that he "resolve[s] at once to join so lucrative a profession" (5). After writing University College in Toronto for information and receiving in return "a printed slip of paper which gave a list of books . . . and various interesting items from which" he is able to conclude "that two years from entering the University [he] might, if reasonably diligent, write C.E. after [his] name" (5), Prentiss departs for city to lay claim to the opportunity and wealth which he is certain will be his.

From the outset, then, the novel and its central character show signs of an ethos associated with urban promise, technological progress, and, especially, the self-made man. Enthusiasm for ideas of liberal individualism was not uncommon in the context, of course, and, in fact, as our earlier study of Machar has shown, such enthusiasm could sometimes be curiously compatible with the conservative, more collectivist disposition which dominated the period. As Allan Smith has argued in "The Myth of the Self-Made Man in Canada, 1850-1914," while recent Canadian historiography in its attempt to characterize the Canadian mind has emphasized "a continuing . . . attachment to conservative principles" of "class and community," and a continuing belief in "collectivist and quasi-collectivist" ideas, such emphasis, right as it may be, should not prevent our seeing "the other side of the coin"--the presence, just as continuing, of "a Canadian assertion of faith in the power of the individual." Indeed, "the myth of the self-made man informed no small part of [Victorian English Canadian] thinking about society and its nature," says Smith; "many Canadians, certainly, did not hesitate to portray their society as one which at once allowed scope for, and had been shaped by, individual activity" (189-90).

In London, Barr certainly did not hesitate to portray Canada that way for readers of The Idler. Barr typically described Canada as a vast land of "millions of acres of the finest wheatland" ("And What Good" 385), of "ample water power unexploited and mineral wealth beyond the dreams of avarice" (editorial, Idler Nov. 1902, 250), in short, as "the land of opportunity" that offers "great good luck for a robust young man who wishes to better his condition" ("Greatness" 663). Only half-frivolously--for, as we have seen, in his estimation the "invasion of Canada" by emigrating Americans was not to be scoffed at--Barr encouraged his British readers to rush out and "take their passages to Canada" in search of fortune and happiness (editorial, *Idler* Nov. 1902, 250).

The notion of the self-made man introduced by way of Tom Prentiss in *The Measure of the Rule*, of course, differs significantly from Barr's use (perhaps abuse) of that notion in his *Idler* encouragements of robust young Britons to emigrate. In his novel (as in the earlier *Alarms*) Barr seems aware that, certainly by late century at least, the Canadian self-made success story was no longer simply one of, to use the words of one of his *Idler* pieces, that "most exhilarating occupation" of "felling trees . . . in the pure, inspiring air of a Canadian winter" ("Greatness" 663). It is to the city and to the university that Prentiss goes in quest of success, a decision, in fact, that would have been well in keeping with the spirit of the age. "As early as the 1840's," says Smith, "the transformation of Upper Canadian society into a more complex and differentiated entity" would "no longer" permit it "to be seen as raw and unfinished, waiting for the hand of man who, in transforming it, would make his own career." A "tool" was needed "in the struggle for self-sufficiency," and fast becoming that tool was education, the virtue of which "lay in the fact that in a universe of flux and change it equipped one to make his own way" (194). Adds Smith, with the help of a contemporary reflection on the matter:

> Within twenty years this line of argument had become a familiar one. As one Canadian, recalling his earlier experiences, put it: "I had heard that knowledge was power--and I looked upon Algebra and Euclid and the whole academic course as the rudimentary steam-engine with which I should sometime run a train of first-class cars, freighted full of hope and worldly success into some great depot of happiness. I looked upon education as a toolchest--as something to work with." (194-5)

With algebra, Euclid, and science as his engine, too, and with dreams of both C.E. behind his name and money in his pocket, Prentiss finds his way to University College in Toronto only to discover that, however firm may have been the mythology of education in service of self-help and progress, reality is different--his "University career" is but "half-a-day" long. His first morning on campus, Prentiss, as yet unregistered, takes in a chemistry class to pass the time; the professor, however, having "detected a foreign body in the human mixture" of his class, has him removed and ushered into the library of the University Head, from whom he learns the sad fact that "the University grants the degree, but civil engineering is not yet taught in the college" (30). A speechless Prentiss, his first morning as a student of the university about to be his last, hears a parting, half-apologetic explanation from the sympathetic Head:

> That's right, that's right. We are a new country, you see, and must creep before we walk. We take the name of University although our teaching is not so universal as it should be. All will come in time, no doubt. With our undeveloped west, civil engineering is doubtless one of the great professions of the future, and there are those who say that instruction in this and other similar branches is much more to the purpose than the study of Latin or Greek which we are so fond of here. Perhaps so, perhaps so. I am old-fashioned, and love the classics. There is a bright side to everything if we can but see it. If you but apprentice yourself for two years to a civil engineer or a land surveyor, you will get an education as no college can bestow. You will learn things by doing them, and when you come up to our periodical examinations, your pen will describe in your own words the actions your hand has already performed, and that, I assure you, is better than learning from books. (32)

The age's emphasis upon "learning as an adjunct to success," as Smith says in his study of the self-help ethic in Canada, led almost inevitably to the debate, clearly suggested in the Head's explanation to Prentiss, "between learning that was useful and learning that was not" (196). In fact, as A. B. McKillop has shown in "The Research Ideal and the University of Toronto," this debate was very much current at the Toronto university in the last half of the nineteenth century. Although in Barr's novel the debate mostly takes the form of the broader conflict between classical learning and modern education, the debate in fact began, as McKillop shows, as a more narrowly defined conflict between theoretical and applied science. And as such, it was a conflict both related to, and a corollary of, the debate between Science and Religion which had so concerned De Mille and so consumed Machar. It was a variation of the period's Science-Religion debate in that for many (even and especially for those within the scientific community) the question of theoretical or applied science begged the question of, or debate between, science that showed God's creative handiwork versus science that showed Godless materialism. "The progress of abstract science," observed one contemporary, "is of extreme importance to a nation depending on its manufactures. It is only the overflowing of Science, arising from the very fulness of its measure, that benefit [sic] industry. Yet in our Mammonworship we adore the golden calf, and do not see its real creator. It is abstract science and not practical science," concluded the commentator, "that is the life and soul of industry" (qtd in McKillop, "Research Ideal" 80). In the last three decades of the century, however, the distinct and significant place and position of science within the university was progressively being assured. In other words, science, through most of the Victorian period an "uplifting, moral discipline," a way of "retracing the thoughts of God" (Berger, Science 46), was on its way to becoming what it would be in the twentieth century, a "procedure, or an orientation," as Wiebe says in the context of changing

American ideas; "when it did . . . connote exact truths, it referred to something very specific--the doctor's microbe--not to the laws of a world order" (147). By 1879 the University of Toronto, for example, as McKillop observes, had "constructed laboratories in chemistry, geology and mineralogy, biology, and physics"; by 1897, the university had departments offering PhDs in biology, chemistry, physics, and geology ("Research Ideal" 93). Science, in effect, had won, or at least had won a place beyond challenge in the university, and the debate between theoretical and applied science became less a purely academic philosophical or theological dispute and became much more a corollary debate of that earlier one. The debate became, in this latter period (the beginning of which forms the background to The Measure, which, at the start of Prentiss's educational venture, is set in 1873), a public, practical, and political one--often intense and acrimonious--over the question, not of which science best honoured the creator, but of which science would most effectively and efficiently promote the progress and prosperity of an industrialized Canada. Where Barr stood in the controversy is already suggested by his implied criticism in The Measure of the University of Toronto as an institution so bound to old-fashioned classical notions and ideals that it is quite content to watch the creeping development of so potentially progressive and prosperous a nation as Canada.

In fact, in his other writing, Barr's stand on the matter often approached the stand taken by a number of the more anti-intellectual commentators of the period. These commentators were of the mind, ironically reflected in The Measure by the Head despite his avowed dedication to classical education, that "the training which had most to do with one's struggle to advance oneself did not . . . come from schools at all." But, "whatever its source," these commentators went on, "knowledge must be practical in its application. . . . [And h]e who would be successful must also strive to broaden his practical experience" (Smith 196). About the value and need for such practical knowledge and experience, Barr could be very direct. Although Barr, for his Idler readers, frequently held up the United States as an example of moral concern, he also periodically held up the United States as the model of progressive practicality which Britain should emulate. "There seems to be an unquenchable thirst for information in America, which has no counterpart in this country," he began one "Idler's Club" essay, "yet books like Smiles' 'Self-Help,' which we all used to read when we were boys, gave dozens of instances where a desire for practical learning led to fame and fortune." Americans, he added, thrive on such practical reading all their lives--"every magazine, even those dealing with stories short and long, devotes much of its space to informative articles showing how things are done" ("Ranch" 436-7). If confirmation of the American thirst for practical knowledge were necessary, Barr continued, his readers need only consider the American phenomenon of correspondence schools, which, he noted, "prepare you for a situation as a book-keeper, stenographer, advertisement writer, show-card writer, window trimmer, illustrator, chemist"--and his list went on ("Ranch" 437). "It needs no prophet," he concluded, to foresee

> that if this kind of thing goes on for another twenty-five years; if the strong young men on the farms and in the factories of America are eager for practical knowledge, and if the young men of England are content to be "flannelled fools at the wicket, and muddied oafs at the goal," reading the trashy limerick weeklies, which the presses pour forth in millions, while the upper classes are wrangling over theological points in the recurring Education Bills, Britons will be irretrievably left behind in the race for opulence and efficiency, while the United States will win everything in sight. ("Ranch" 439)

It is no wonder, he added as a final afterthought which certainly must have left some readers questioning the author's birthright and loyalty, that the Englishman abroad is not liked, "not . . . because he is an Englishman, but because he is an ignoramus, and not only an ignoramus, but a conceited one, who apparently doesn't want to know" (439).

"We live in a world of writers and talkers," Barr once observed, "and perhaps it is but natural that such a world should place difficulties in the way of those who do not write much or talk much, but who act and get a thing done" ("Real Garden City" 547). Though himself a writer and, by all accounts, also a noted raconteur, Barr frequently attempted to redress this natural imbalance, celebrating the doers of his age. In his estimation, for example, it was Canada's good fortune that she had practical men amongst her most distinguished citizens, men like Sir William Van Horne, "probably the most celebrated man in the world, who strung the provinces of the dominion of Canada together on a double thread of steel" ("Horrors" 131). Or men like the "great imperialist" Colonel George Taylor Denison, whom, once, Barr undertook to "explain,"--an undertaking not "a little difficult"--to his Idler readers, "luke-warm Englishmen, who . . . favour[] every country but [their] own." Barr explained the fiery Canadian nationalist and imperialist by contrasting him with his famous political adversary, the annexationist Goldwin Smith, "D.C.L., Regius Professor of Modern History in Oxford, [who] has resided in Toronto for thirty-eight years," a man who, "whenever anything is to be said against the British connection, or in favour of England's enemies, . . . may be depended upon to say it in delightful diction that charms all listeners":

> The history of Canada for these past thirty years has been largely a conflict between these two men, and I, for one, am delighted to think that Colonel Denison has been victorious all along the line. It has been a contest between the study and the field; between the theorist and the practical man; between the philanthropic philosopher who would wipe away national lines, and see universal brotherly love prevail, and the military officer who would like the other nations to show some signs of brotherly love before he allows his sword to become blunt. (editorial, Idler May 1909, 229-30)

Barr, then, his imperialism notwithstanding, could be an aggressive supporter of aggressively practical individualism, and, in fact, so far as education was concerned, some of his writing could leave room to question whether it was at all useful, let alone vital, for success. The pointed humour of two of his novels, for example, depends very much upon conflict between the educated and the un- or under-educated, often, it seems, to the latter's advantage.

In In the Midst of Alarms, the educated, cultured Professor Renmark, through most of the novel, is no match for the American live-wire and self-made man, Dick Yates. Yates, as we have seen, may embody cultural traits and values which one part of Barr finds morally wanting, even repugnant; yet there is that other part of Barr that clearly admires Yates's vitality, and that, moreover, takes satiric delight in the way the American's wit and hustle serve to show up the bookish Canadian professor at almost every turn. That such is Barr's intention, moreover, would seem to be suggested by the fact that Yates, as Louis MacKendrick has observed, is some respects "an extended self-portrait" of the author (introduction xix). Yates is not entirely uneducated; indeed, like Barr, earlier in his life he has been a rural Ontario school teacher. Like Barr, also, however, he has made a success of himself in journalism despite his Canadian experience--despite his own education and despite his former ambition himself to be an educator. He explains to Renmark the turn of events which has led him from a rural Ontario schoolyard to life at the top of the American newsworld:

> "I thought a teacher should look after the physical as well the mental welfare of his pupils. It did not seem to me that his duty to those under his charge ended with mere book learning."
>
> "I quite agree with you," said the professor cordially.
>
> "Thanks. Well, the trustees didn't. I joined the boys at their games, hoping my example would have an influence on their conduct on the playground as well as in the schoolroom. We got up a rattling good cricket club. You may remember that I stood rather better at cricket . . . than I did in mathematics or grammar. . . . One day, at noon, we began a game. . . . And, when one o'clock came, I thought it a pity to call school and spoil so good and interesting a contest. The boys were unanimously of the same opinion. The girls were happy, picnicking under the trees. So we played cricket all afternoon."

> "I think that was carrying your theory a little too far," said the professor dubiously.
>
> "Just what the trustees thought when they came to hear of it. So they dismissed me; and I think my leaving was the only case on record where the pupils genuinely mourned a teacher's departure. I shook the dust of Canada off me feet, and have never regretted it. I tramped to Buffalo, continuing to shake the dust at every step. . . . I got a place on a paper [t]here. . . . Then I drifted to Rochester at a bigger salary, afterward to Albany at a still bigger salary, and . . . [then to] New York. . . . Since then . . . I am about at the top of the tree. . . . When there is anything big going on in the country, I am there. . . ." (13-4)

Though he clearly does not embody a total rejection of the value of teaching and learning (in his dedication to educational principles other than book-learning, Yates surely is meant to be seen as a good teacher), Yates is nevertheless much more the self-made man who has achieved no thanks to education. In Yates is reflected the idea, current in the period, that "great men," in the words of one observer of the age,

> learn very little of what the world admires them for knowing, during what is called their 'educational course.' They are men who are constantly observing little things and great things passing around them, and they remember what they observe. . . . [A]bove all, . . . it is this knowledge obtained among men and from men that is the most useful in any walk of life, literary or commercial. ("Self-Education" 229)

A more complete version of one who learns how to succeed from life, not books, is Pat Maguire, one of the protagonists of Barr's best non-Canadian novel (non-Canadian in any overt sense, that is), The Victors. Like Yates, Maguire shares the place of protagonist in the novel with, in the case of this novel, two college educated men, the careers of all three of whom the novel traces as they seek success and prosperity--in short, victory--in the American business and political worlds. Like Yates, too, Maguire is a hustling, wide-awake Yankee. Unlike Yates, however, Maguire has no formal education to speak of and can see absolutely no good use for college: "You lose all the years you spend there, and what money it costs you, and then you come out not able to meet the world at all, at all. What they learn there is nonsense and no use at all outside, and I'm sure I don't know what good it is inside the colleges either" (64). He believes that he is learning, however--"learning how to control men," as Lottie, the Michigan farmer's daughter and ultimately Maguire's wife, puts it after hearing him describe his educational beliefs:

> "Are you fond of reading?" asked Lottie, hurriedly and somewhat inconsequently. . . .
> "Not of reading books. They're trash, and there's no use wasting time over them. But I like to read men and women. There's something worth your money, and yet it costs nothing. I'm afraid that's as Irish as me name, for if it cost nothing how can it be worth

> money? But what I mean is, that there's some interest in the project, for a man says one thing and he's thinking another, and although he doesn't want you to know what he's thinking yet he always gives you a clew in spite of himself. . . . Then, ye see, if you put together what a man says and what he thinks--"
>
> "What you think he thinks," interrupted and corrected Lottie.
>
> "True for ye. And that's just the point that makes the whole thing a puzzle and gives interest to the game, what you think he thinks, and then form your own conclusions about what's really on his mind, and you can play with him and turn him the way you want him to go, while he believes all the time he is going the way he intended from the very first. It has all the merit and the amusement of driving a contrary pig to market."
>
> "But what good does it do?"
>
> "The pig? Ye sell him when you get there." (61)

The Victors, unlike Barr's Alarms, is written in the spirit of the American muckraking tradition, and thus its protagonist Maguire, as this passage cleary suggests, is very much more a hustler, in many of the morally dubious connotations of the word, too, than the Yankee of Barr's earlier novel. When in the early chapters he gives the college boys Ben McAllister and Jim Monro a real education in American politics and business--hiring his election-rigging services to a group of Michigan farmers set upon overturning a county decision to dig a costly ditch--the reader is left in do doubt that he will go far in politics or business, providing, of course, he is not hanged first. In other words, in Maguire we see once again the tenuous, divided Barr, not yet prepared to be the complete disciple of practicality, progress and liberal individualism. As through the course of The Victors we, with Barr, watch Maguire's rise to power and glory, from simple backwoods peddler in Michigan to extortionist Tammany Boss of New York at whose word bureaucrats and politicians are paid off and men are beaten to near death, we become increasingly aware that we are witness to a bitterly satiric, sardonically illustrated portrait of the limitations--not the material limitations, but the moral limitations--of unrestrained self-help.

Indeed, for all his championing of modern progress, Barr seems always to have been conscious of those limits. Even The Measure of the Rule, for example, which, as we have seen, begins full of the robust spirit of that ethic and initially mocks Canadian unreceptiveness to that spirit, warns of the moral--and cultural--limitations of the purely practical, progressive and utilitarian. In the novel, Tom Prentiss, the university not yet prepared to help him in his aspirations to civil engineering, instead finds his way, almost by accident, into the Toronto Normal School, where he begins a programme of studies which, when successfully completed, would grant him lifetime certification as a teacher. The Toronto Normal School, as the novel portrays it and as Barr himself experienced it, is, in its own conservative, repressive way, a practical institution, "a sort of educational pork-packing factory," Barr described it in "Literature in Canada":

> It gathered in to itself the raw material from all parts of the Province, rushed it through the machine, scraped off some of the ignorance, but not much, and there stood the manufactured article, produced in so many minutes by the watch. I was captured from my native lair, soaked, scraped and so flung upon a defenseless province, certified as being of correct weight and size, all in something less than four months. (pt. 2, 135)

Working upon the mechanical assumption that, as Prentiss's class is told the first day, the school's "business is to train, not to teach"--"the Normal School gives you a document which certifies that you have attended one or more of its sessions, that your conduct has been good, bad, or indifferent, and that your rating as an imparter of knowledge is so-and-so" (87)--the school, in Barr's estimation, ironically turns out educators who, because of the school, are themselves educationally deficient.

The consequence of this deficiency, of course, is not so much that the Normal School students are prepared to make but sorry successes of themselves in life after Normal School, although the novel does strike out in that direction, too, in a way, moreover, that shows Barr delivering an uncharacteristically hard blow to the self-help ethos. Just before the end of the term, Prentiss notes the abrupt termination of the dreams of success brought to the school by one of its students, Hezekiah Crump: "a loose-jointed, ungainly creature," a man whom "nature had formed . . . to be the butt of whatever community he joined" (270), a "dullard" so intellectually ill-equipped that even the Normal School cannot "train" him, Crump simply disappears from the school just short of the session's end, apparently headed for a humiliating return to his backwoods home and to who knows what future. Crump, of course, is a victim of a combination of things: of nature--he is "one of Nature's cruel practical jokes" (275)--; of the Normal School that attracted him, admitted him, and then could do nothing for him but painfully prolong the inevitable; but mostly, suggests Barr, "he is a victim of that deluding volume, 'Smiles' Self-Help,' . . . a tattered copy [of which] is in his pocket at this moment as he tramps [home]ward" (275).

Still, however much it makes victims of its own students, jeopardizing their chances for personal success and prosperity, the school or its educational deficiencies, more significantly, stand as an impediment to Canadian cultural and moral progress. The school, as Barr recalls it in "Literature in Canada," is one obstacle in the way of "attempt[s] . . . to civilize the school teachers of Canada" (pt. 2, 135); for without civilized teachers, concludes

Barr, slim are the chances of "boys now in school grow[ing] up . . . to buy more books and less whiskey," and slimmer yet will be "the chances of Canada producing a Sir Walter Scott or a Jane Austen from among the present boys and girls" (pt. 2, 136).

It becomes increasingly clear, then, that Barr's thinking on education and progress, both moral and material, is marked by some complexity and apparent equivocation, and it is clear, too, moreover, that The Measure of the Rule's satire on the subject cuts in more than one direction. The various thrusts of the novel's satire are perhaps most conveniently considered by way of the novel's descriptions of the institutions of learning (or "educational shop[s]" [36], as Prentiss once hears them referred to) which Prentiss encounters in Toronto. We have already considered, of course, Prentiss's short-lived experience with the University of Toronto, the incident which enables Barr to deliver his charge that the Canadian education establishment is unreceptive to progress. To a large degree, that charge is confirmed when Prentiss, wandering the busy Toronto streets the day after his university experience and at a loss for what to do next, happens upon a potential alternative to the university:

> Suddenly my attention was arrested by a phrase, "College of Technology," which, painted in large letters, designated a square, commonplace, ugly edifice,

> vastly different from the towered and pinnacled University building from which I had been courteously dismissed. I stood and looked at it, for in architectural terms it expressed the downfall of my hopes. Here was one alternative, the head of the University had said, and, after all, the profession I had chosen was as practical and commonplace as a keg of nails, so why should it not be learned in a house so frankly matter-of- fact? (35)

Prentiss's concluding question here seems to be rhetorical, but only in the disillusionment of the moment; the profession Prentiss has had in mind is, no doubt, a practical one, but that such a vocation should be so denigrated in the Canadian educational scheme of things as this description suggests is one more instance, implies Barr, of Canadian antipathy to progress. Only slightly better is the third place of supposedly higher learning that Prentiss experiences, the Toronto Normal School, into which Prentiss grudgingly drifts as a student. Composed of "two large temples of learning" of "classical design" set upon "grounds with trees, shrubbery and flower-beds" (70-1), the school in appearance--it is "not so commonplace as that of the College of Technology, nor so ornate and romantic as that of the University buildings" (71)--too suggests its status (and the quality of education within its doors). Whatever slight attraction, architectural or otherwise, the Normal School may have had for Prentiss, however, the school's appeal, as we have seen, quickly fades for him.

Within a day of having experienced the school from the inside, Prentiss wishes he were elsewhere. As the Normal School Head finishes the first morning's call of the roll and "a gong" strikes twice "with a brazen clang" to signal the end of the first class, Prentiss reflects:

> I could not help comparing this strident clangour with the mellow tone of the tower bell at the University, and a wave of regret almost overwhelmed me. The difference between the two centres of learning, from stucco to stone, from the commonplace to the ideal, were all against the institution in which I found myself. The contrast between this hot-tempered, sharp-tongued principal, and the snuff-taking, courteous old scholar, seemed typified by the modern factory clink of our gong compared with the distant cathedral-toned bell in the Norman tower. Contempt and dislike for this hurried manufactory of half-formed teachers flung out upon the public every six months; this farce of scholarship, filled me with regretful longing for the leisurely methods and picturesque surroundings of the older school whose gates were closed against me. (89)

That Prentiss disdains the mechanical character of his present educational situation is not in itself surprising; that Prentiss bears no ill-feeling whatsoever towards the institution which has barred the way of his progress, however, that, indeed, he affectionately recalls both the place and his short-lived experience in it, is perhaps surprising, but only until we consider Barr's larger purpose here: education, certainly, must serve the individual's, and, for that matter, the nation's, practical, material needs, but it must not forget or ignore the individual's and the nation's moral and cultural needs and aspirations. No doubt Barr would have agreed with those commentators of the period who were "concerned . . . that education must stimulate and develop the higher side of man's nature if his powers as a free and responsible individual were to be fully engaged" (Smith 197-8).

Barr, furthermore, would likely also have concurred with those who of the period who argued that the self-made "Mr. Successful Man" (DeWitt 28), "unadorned by anything save his money-making powers" (Smith 197), was the unrefined "pest of modern life" (DeWitt 28).[10] A suggestion of this idea is present in Yates, the brash, go-ahead Yankee of In the Midst of Alarms. Although Yates, as we have noted earlier, is something of an extended self-portrait of the author, he nevertheless is too, as we have also seen, a subject of satire from whom Barr maintains a safe ironic distance. In one scene, for example, we find Yates making a nuisance of himself as he attempts a flirtation, unsuccessfully, as it turns out, with Margaret Howard, a local farm girl, who, as Yates to his chagrin belatedly discovers, is not uneducated, but who at this moment is simply intent upon not letting the talkative Yankee interfere with the very practical task of bread baking:

Yates realised that the way to success lay in keeping the conversation in his own hands and not depending on any response. In this way a man may best display the store of knowledge he possesses, to the admiration and bewilderment of his audience, even though his store consists of merely samples like the outfit of a commercial traveller; yet a commercial traveller who knows his business can so arrange his samples on the table of his room in a hotel that they give the onlooker an idea of the vastness and wealth of the warehouses from which they are drawn.

"Bread," said Yates with the serious air of a very learned man, "is a most interesting subject. It is a historical subject--it is a biblical subject. . . . Now, in this country bread has gone through three distinct stages, and although I am a strong believer in progress, yet, in the case of our most important article of food, I hold that bread of today is inferior to the bread our mothers used to make, or perhaps, I should say, our grandmothers. This is, unfortunately, becoming the age of machinery--and machinery, while it may be quicker, is certainly not so thorough as old fashioned hand work. There is a new writer in England named Ruskin who is very bitter against machinery. He would like to see it abolished, or so he says. . . ."

"You, in New York, surely do not call the author of 'Modern Painters' and the 'Seven Lamps of Architecture' a new man. . . ."

This was the longest speech Margaret had made to him, and, as he said afterwards to the professor in describing its effects, it took him right off his feet. He admitted to the professor, but not to the girl, that he had never read a word of Ruskin in his life. The allusion he had made to him he had heard someone else use, and he had worked it into an article before now with telling effect. "As Mr. Ruskin says" looked well in a newspaper

> column. . . . Mr. Yates, however, was not at the present moment prepared to enter into a discussion on either the age or the merits of the English writer.
>
> "Ah, well," he said, "technically speaking, of course, Ruskin is not a new man. What I meant was that he is looked on--ah--in New York as--that is--you know . . . ." (78-80)

The scene's romantic comedy (an element of all Barr's fiction, serious as well as popular) does not completely dispel the serious suggestion that the progressive Yankee hustler's intellectual wares are not substantial and that, for all his blustering know-it-all, there are more things in earth and heaven than are admitted into his view of life. Moreover, the cocksure Yates's comical collision with the deceptively erudite Margaret Howard suggests the idea that the former might well benefit from the "civilizing capacity" (Smith 197) which the latter has gotten by way of a liberal education.

But we must not over-emphasize Barr's belief in the transforming moral power of education. Even though, for example, The Measure of the Rule raises the intriguing problem of reconciling the idealistic, classical conception of education as character building with the modern, progressive conception of education as practical preparation for material success, the novel ultimately simply drops the matter, and does so, in fact, in a way that, as critics have pointed out, is clearly damaging to the novel. The novel's ending (which, as we shall see later in this study, is in its own peculiar way revealing of the author's mind) sees Prentiss, not as a civil engineer surveying rail lines through Western Canada, nor as a teacher enlightening young minds in Ontario, but, strangely, as a self-taught painter struggling for survival and artistic recognition in bohemian Paris. As MacKendrick says, "Barr manages the conversion of Tom Prentiss from engineering by way of teaching to art with limited finesse and little narrative preparation," and not only does the protagonist's credibility suffer from the author's "meager attention to his hero's . . . change of heart" (introduction xiv), so also does the novel's thematic concern with education.

Indeed, Barr's treatment of the theme or subject of education is as much a matter of politics and world view--his imperialism--as is it a matter of education alone. In this respect, Barr is very much like that more famous Canadian humourist, social critic and imperialist, Stephen Leacock. Like Barr, Leacock could be a man of apparent equivocation and contradiction on the subject of education. Like Barr, he could be, for example, as Robertson Davies says of him, "strongly and even bitterly critical of classical education, advocating technical and scientific education as the hope of civilization" (6-7). But Leacock could also fulminate, as Leacock biographer David M. Legate points out, against "the march of what he called the mechanical side of education" (124). For example, as Davies says, Leacock could even, in "Oxford as I See It," contrast favourably "Oxonian desipience" "with the efficiency of American universities" (27). For Leacock, Oxford, its rich history tangible in every "old stairway worn down by the feet of ten generations of students," in every "old name[] carved here [or] there upon the stone" ("Oxford" 76), and in every "tangle of ivy" upon the walls ("Oxford" 98), represents the past preserved in ongoing culture. Something near that Oxonian character and weight of tradition is now preserved too in the new world, Barr, in The Measure of Rule, suggests by way of Prentiss's first reflections upon entering the University of Toronto:

> Here, then, I stood in an edifice of hewn, rough, and carven stone, with stain-glassed windows, with cloisters, with long echoing halls, with ceilings of timber. The architect, I was told, had wandered in Europe, visiting ancient seats of learning, and here, from the Aladdin's lamp of his experience, had conjured up in the new world a dream of the old. I had always loved to read of bygone times, and in spite of the modern young men around me, in spite of my own modernness, and in the teeth of the fact that I was about to begin the study of the most unromantic, practical profession in the world, the glamour of medievalism was over me, and I felt as if I were taking part in some pageant of the past. (27)

For Barr, then, the University of Toronto is not so much an educational institution as is it a symbol; itself a repository of traditional cultural values, the university stands as a symbolic reminder that Canada is an imperial bulwark of such values.[11]

That Barr did not hold liberal education in itself and apart from culture as a kind of moral panacea, however, is made far more clear in The Victors. As our initial consideration of it no doubt has already suggested, The Victors again shows that, however much Barr admired attitudes and aspects of modern progress, his fear of progress's moral limitations was amply confirmed by frightening elements of American culture and society. Like In the Midst of Alarms, The Victors, as we have noted, works by way of contrasting protagonists, the uneducated Pat Maguire serving as a foil to the educated Jim Monro and Ben McAllister. Maguire, as we have seen, makes it to the top of the corrupt New York political world, and does so by way of strict adherence to one guiding principle, that when it comes to politics, "while there's cash there's hope" (69). For Monro and McAllister, however, the rise to the top comes not without moral anguish. At the outset of the novel, the boys, fresh out of college except for a few weeks on the road attempting to make it in "the peddling business," have already learned that college education is no guarantee of success. "We ought to have gone to a peddlers' college if we wanted to earn money at this trade," says Monro; "what's the use of quadratic equations here?" (7). Upon teaming up with Maguire on the road through rural Michigan, however, Munro and McAllister more than make up for their lack of practical education in the trade. Still, throughout their experience with Maguire, they maintain, morally speaking, the high road, and when, after Maguire has taken a tidy profit on the backwoods Michigan election-rigging scam and he offers the boys the opportunity to join ranks with him as he prepares to take on the big time in New York, Monro and McAllister decline without hesitation. They may share with Maguire the common "object . . . [of] material success," but they are not prepared, as a concerned McAllister admits after having turned down Maguire's offer, to achieve that object at any cost:

> I'm rather afraid. . . . I'd rather believe in people than not, and if it is shown that this belief is misplaced in one instance, I don't want that to keep me from believing in someone else. I want to preserve the freshness of my soul. I want to guard my trust in man as well as my trust in Providence. (109)

Monro and McAllister, then, especially in comparison with Maguire, implicitly suggests that, as Allan Smith sums up the thought of one Victorian on the value of education, "providing businessmen with a university education was likely to make them less bumptious and more humane" (197).[12]

If, in their case, education has both a retarding effect upon Yankee hucksterism and a moral restraint upon character, however, it does not spare them the moral agonies of success in a progressive, materialistic American society and it does not come without moral cost. Monro and McAllister do succeed, becoming, says the narrator, the originators of the department store, the "huge commercial Juggernaut that would crush out local opposition and ruin the small dealer, an idea against which future legislatures were to make laws, an idea designed to bring untold wealth to its promoters and unmitigated curses upon their heads" (369). Their success, then, will inevitably have a moral cost socially, but it also exacts a more immediate personal price, particularly for McAllister, the business genius of the partnership. Consumed with the commercial enterprise which takes control of all his waking hours, he achieves what he believes is happiness when, years later, he is able to give his wife, as "a kind of testimonial showing his appreciation of her common sense in marrying so potent a man," a "truly magnificent birthday present"--an extravagantly opulent mansion, rivaling the grandest of New York, complete with elevator, doors that open "noiselessly at [a] touch, lighting an electric cluster as" they open (478), and "a telephone in every room, so that [McAllister] shouldn't need to run down to the hall each time the Central [rings him] up" (477). Ironically but not surprisingly, Connie McAllister leaves her husband the first night she spends (alone, as she has spent most her married nights) in.

the cavernous house, providing only a letter that makes plain to her husband what should have been clear to him all along. Recalling one rare occasion when her husband actually agreed to a leisurely outing--"A drive through the park on the middle of a business day!"--her reflections in the letter are not just a condemnation of a man, but of a culture, a culture which "quest[s] for goodness in bigness" and which judges "a man . . . according to the slide of his bank balance" (Wiebe 40-1):

> I was nearly speechless between hope and fear, but I soon saw that you did not notice my agitation. Your effigy sat beside me in the carriage, but your mind had never left Sixth Avenue. Lines of preoccupation were on your brow, dial-marks of minutes being lost. You saw nothing of the park, with its imitation lakes; its imitation hills and dales, its imitation vistas, bogus from gate to gate; no wonder New York is proud of it; scenery built to scale; its motto, "Keep off the grass." And as I sat silent as yourself, I read your life by the lines on your brow as a gypsy reads the palm. I saw you old before your time; all faculty for any rational enjoyment of life burned away before you were middle-aged; rich without a healthful nerve left in your body; a man who had rushed to the bank-counter of his Maker demanding that his life be discounted and paid cash down instantly; willing, eager to sacrifice twenty, thirty, forty years of it, for ten condensed years, now, on the nail. Then the final settlement, catching you doubtless at the busiest time, stricken dead at your telephone. . . . I know a good woman would have sat down . . . and wept before taking such a step as I am about to take, but I assure you I leave

> this house as dry-eyed as I entered it. I seem to have passed the weeping stage. I think the Midas touch of New York is already metalising my heart, but I hope I flee from it in time. (481-3)

Monro and McAllister's education, then, however liberally humanistic it may have been, has been largely powerless to prevent the dehumanizing forces of urban, progressive American culture from taking their costly human toll. It is not that a liberal education is practically unimportant or morally ineffectual; it is that American social and economic progressivism is materially powerful and morally overwhelming.

If Barr's attitudes and views regarding education reveal only a hesitant attraction to notions of self-help and to the liberal, individualist ethic, or conversely, if those attitudes and views seem to confirm Barr's lingering fear and mistrust of progress, we should not therefore assume that Barr was certain and secure in the conservative ideology of imperialism. Indeed, Barr's social criticism and views of social reform strongly suggest that his imperialism was not grounded in the kind of idealism possessed by Canadian imperialists, and possessed especially by the imperialists of Barr's own generation. As Berger's _A Sense of Power_ has shown, and as our earlier study of Machar has also suggested, "the relationship between imperialism and social reform was intimate and direct"; since "imperial power", as Berger notes, "depended upon a strong and stable internal society," imperialism inevitably became a "search for values, both personal and political, which would check the spirit of commercialism and the social atomization of [the] time" (177). Barr, as we have seen, of course, no doubt shared with imperialists a very real moral concern about such social instability, atomization, and commercialization. In fact, in some of his non-fictional writing, Barr presented ideas of social reform which were not only in keeping with Canadian imperialists, but which were, or have become, in a sense, the intellectual bench-mark of Canadian imperialism. As Berger has argued, the truly nationalist character of Canadian imperialism is perhaps most evident in the imperialist notion that England, suffering the social ravages of overpopulation, pollution, and unemployment, was fast becoming the outworn centre of the Empire--she has "outlived her body," as Lorne Murchison, the idealistic protagonist of Sara Jeannette Duncan's _The Imperialist_, puts it (229)--and that Canada, "free from the hectic social pressures and overcrowding of the motherland" (Berger, _Sense of Power_ 181), might well become the new centre of the Empire. In his _Idler_ writings, at least, Barr willingly adopted this idea. "England will be formed into one vast park," he once predicted; her "historical buildings carefully preserved," her "slums removed" and replaced by "beautiful houses . . . [and] gardens, parks, and lawns," she will "become the sanatorium of the race," the "pleasure garden of the world." "There will be no poor," he went on, because "the former unemployed will be working in Canadian factories by electric machines, in air untainted by coal smoke" ("And What Good" 388). In other words, it is on Canada, a nation which "in time [will be] the most prosperous of all countries" ("And What Good" 386), "that [England's] fate depends" ("And What Good" 385).

In his fiction, however, Barr rarely confronted social problems or offered definite suggestions for social reform. (The Victors is possibly an exception, but that work is a novel primarily of moral concern--with social implications, of course--rather than a novel of direct social concern and reform.) Yet when, in the novel The Mutable Many, he did attempt a rare direct fictional venture into the world of Victorian social problems, the result was revealing. The Mutable Many shows Barr, not as one who is idealistically convinced of the social efficacy of imperialism, but as one who is pragmatically reconciled to the economic calculus and to the ideology of a near laissez-faire liberalism.

The Mutable Many is a strike novel which traces a protracted labour dispute in a London, England factory. More particularly, the novel follows the efforts of an idealistic young worker and ultimately Union Secretary and strike leader, Mr. Marsten, to win wage increases and improved conditions for factory workers, not from the factory owners, but from Mr. Sartwell, the strong-minded and strong-willed factory manager. Sartwell, indeed, is not of the capitalist class, a class whose members Barr depicts as ineffectual, "timid, cautious, . . . [and] irresolute" (2), more concerned with its aspirations and pretensions to aristocracy than with the day-to-day affairs of business. Sartwell is a manager, and through him, Barr, astutely, insists upon pointing out the emerging bureaucratization of industry and the growing power of a middle management class, a class of self-made men who, suggests Barr, like Sartwell, "kn[o]w infinitely more about the works" of industry than the owner-capitalists do, and who, while the owner-capitalists "have been at college", "have, in a measure, educated [themselves], . . . have worked hard night and day. . . . [They] have attained a certain position, a certain responsibility, and a certain amount of money" (11).

The youthful and idealistic labour leader, Marsten, however, is also something of a self-made man--"I came from the gutter," he says, and "what education I have, I gave to myself" (11)--but, of course, he has directed his energies to helping the worker, not himself. In fact, as Union Secretary and strike leader, he ultimately dedicates himself to "revolutioniz[ing] the labour of the world":

> He saw in the future one vast republic of workers--not bounded by nationality, but spreading over the entire earth--with its foothold wherever one man toiled with his hands to enrich another. . . . He looked forward to a

> time when every worker in England would be a member of the Union; after that he hoped to affiliate all the members in all English-speaking countries; finally, the benighted foreigner would be included. Then, when the whole was united like an electric installation in a city, the unfortunate capitalist who placed his finger on one point would receive the combined current of the entire system, and die without knowing what hurt him. (282)

In his idealistic dedication to universal socialism, Marsten, as Barr suggests in understated irony, "did not quite appreciate the practical difficulties which lay in wait for a scheme that looked beautiful on paper" (283).

Indeed, like many turn-of-the-century imperialists, Barr rejected socialism as an effective means of social reform.[13] His _Idler_ account of a Fabian meeting that he attended clearly revealed his attitude towards that movement and its adherents:

> Intellectuality was in the air, and a commonplace man like myself, plastered against the wall, felt uneasily the superiority of mentality which abounded in the room. . . . Here was the leaven that, for good or evil, was to leaven the lump, and that minute portion of the lump up against the wall . . . did not quite know whether he wished to be leavened or not, conscious . . . of the hidden danger in these charming theories were put in practice, and did not happen to work exactly as had been expected.
>
> When Mr. [H. G.] Wells sat down [after his speech], sixteen persons and a half rose to their feet. The half got just part way up, and sat down again. . . . The Chairman mentioned one

> name, and that person made a clever little speech. . . . Then another, and another, and another. . . . At last George Bernard Shaw got on his feet, and delivered a rattling, humourous discourse that was a delight to listen to. Perhaps twenty people spoke, not one of whom agreed with Mr. Wells, nor with the other nineteen. . . . [G]radually I came to see that the Fabians were merely joyous children, playing heedlessly in a power house. All chance of Socialism ever becoming a living problem is this country fades away as these charming infants prattle, each one so clever and so conscious of it. England is quite safe from Socialism so long as socialistic societies endure to act as a bulwark against them. (editorial, Idler Dec. 1906, 365)

Barr, thus, did not necessarily reject the idealism of socialism --he pointed out, for example, that it was "not likely that [he] should go on paying a guinea a volume for [Ruskin], year in and year out, if [he] were not" an admirer of that idealistic socialist thinker ("Real Garden City" 553)--but rather he rejected the impracticality of socialist idealism. Like the Fabian Society, for example, Ruskin's St. George's Guild also was evidence of that impracticality, in Barr's estimation. "Although Ruskin eulogized beauty all his life, and probably knew more about artistic architecture than any man of his time," the St. George's Guild's Laxey cloth mill on the Isle of Man was, said Barr, "the ugliest structure that ever an artistic man placed upon the face of the earth," a mill no different in appearance--and in operation--than "the most conventional cloth factory in the most repulsive slum of the Midlands" ("Real Garden City" 551).

Unlike other imperialists who rejected socialist idealism, however, Barr did not substitute for that idealism a social idealism of his own; he did not, for example, as did Stephen Leacock, "reject[] socialism [while nevertheless] endors[ing] a forward-looking policy of state-directed reform to ensure equality of opportunity" (Berger, Sense of Power 196). Unlike most imperialists of his generation, he affirmed the economic calculus as the most important criterion in social change. Socialists, in his opinion, were "not only chattering children but [were also] infants in business" (editorial, Idler Dec. 1906, 366). If the Ruskin mill failed, it was to be expected, because Ruskin and the Guild had "ignored . . . the experience of business men all the world over, and their experience is this: That if there is to be any permanence in any undertaking, that undertaking must pay its own way, and not depend upon charitable contributions" ("Real Garden City" 549). In his estimation, therefore, socialism (as he claimed to have told William Morris) was "all humbug" ("Oasis" 112), and if meaningful and lasting social change were possible, it could only come from "beneficent individualism" ("Oasis" 114) guided by business sense and the profit motive.

It was not, as we have seen, that Barr was completely lacking in social concern. In fact, in The Mutable Many he shows a keen sympathy for the plight and conditions of London's working poor. His description of the working-class tenement district to which Marsten and the other factory workers are condemned, for example, is nearly Dickensian in its evocation of human misery.[14] "In almost any other country than England the name by which the evil-smelling cul-de-sac off Light Street was known," Barr begins this three-page melancholic description, "might be supposed to have been given it by some cynical humourist. It was called Rose Garden Court" (58). Dark, dreary and dilapidated, this "fetid" "human warren," notes Barr wryly, "was merely fairly representative of the home of the British workingman, in the wisest, largest, proudest, most wealthy city in the world, at the end of the nineteenth century, after a thousand years, more of less, of progress" (60).

If Barr's novel shows a near Dickensian concern for the social conditions, however, it also shows a near Dickensian contempt for the mutability of the many, to rephrase the novel's title: as a whole, the workers are depicted in the novel as a dissolute, unintelligent, malleable mass, manipulated by unprincipled, demagogical Slackbridges toward ends that are inimical to social improvement and a lasting benefit to only a selfish few. Marsten, of course, is not a Slackbridge. Nevertheless, however exceptional he may be in his intelligence, selflessness, and unwavering and sincere dedication of the worker, Marsten "did not know," says the narrator early on, "that the desire for improving one's condition is not at all universal, and that even where there may be the germ of a desire, people do not wish to be dragooned into bettering themselves" (63). Nor did he know, as Bruant, who in his wariness of the union is the Stephen Blackpool of Barr's novel, warns him, that

> you may pull yourself up, but you can't lift them [the workers] with you. They've broken the hearts--aye, and the heads too, of many a one that tried to better them. You think you have only the masters and capital to fight. The masters won't hurt you; it's the men you're fighting for that will down you. . . . It isn't money that helps the masters, it's because they've got the sense to know a good man when they see him. Don't be deluded by numbers. What's the good of them? One determined man who doesn't bother about his backing--who knows his principles will back him through thick and thin--will beat any mob. (68)

And stand by Marsten the masters do, once, however, his idealism has been broken. The novel, indeed, is about the education of the idealist; and if Marsten is the pupil, the manager Sartwell is the instructor. Sartwell all along has admired Marsten's intelligence and determination; moreover, he has harboured plans to make the young man his assistant manager, "but not now," Sartwell tells his daughter when she suggests that the labour stalemate should somehow be broken:

"he will be a valuable man when he awakes, but not while he is dreaming. He must be taught his lesson first, and only hard knocks can teach him" (320). Marsten must learn, in other words, what Sartwell himself has learned in his rise from worker and union member to factory manager and master, that the labour movement "is founded on principles that won't do. . . . Any scheme that tends to give a poor workingman the same wages as a good workingman is all wrong" (9). At the novel's end, Marsten, his education in the school of "hard knocks" complete, earns his place beside Sartwell, and the novel, without a qualifying cynicism, affirms, not an idealistic concern for society, but a utilitarian recognition that to "take care of yourself" as Bruant says, "is the rule of the world" (68).

The shallowness of idealism that separates Barr from other imperialists of his generation is evident in another aspect of Barr's thought, closely related to that of social concern and social reform, the aspect of his religious thought. Barr might, as he does in In the Midst of Alarms, for example, gently spoof the ungodliness of the American,[15] and he might elsewhere suggest the spiritual emptiness of life, particularly American life, at the turn of the century, but overall his writing, while it does not reveal a denial of religious conviction, shows little sign of the kind of strong personal religious commitment which, for example, defines Agnes Maule Machar's thought and writing.

Indeed, far from displaying the advantages, personal or social, of religious conviction, Barr's writing repeatedly satirizes religion and religious attitudes of various kinds.

"It is rather remarkable," Barr once observed in The Idler, that the United States, a "desert of dishonesty . . . [in which] a man may commit any crime he pleases with impunity if he possesses sufficient cash [,] . . . produces more new religions to the square foot than any other land on earth" ("Oasis" 105). In The Victors, Barr attempted a fictional confirmation of this incongruity of American life. Lottie Maguire, the wife of the New York Tammany boss Pat Maguire, for example, falls prey to Christian Science, a religion that her husband doesn't pretend to understand--"our minds," he says, "weren't built on the same interchangeable system at all, at all" (470)--but a religion that he nevertheless finds fascinating, especially in its enterprise: "When they're looking after their souls, they're not neglecting good hard cash for their bodies, and that makes me think there's some inspiration in the thing after all. . . . When Jesus Christ was crucified there was only his clothing to cast lots for. When the promoter of Christian Science croaks they'll be millions to divide" (470-1).

Barr's satire of Christian Science in the novel rivals Leacock's "Yahi-Bahi Oriental Society" satire of unconventional sectarian religion in Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich; and like Leacock, too, Barr also condemned the abuses of conventional, orthodox religion, satirically pointing out, especially, as did Leacock, "the penetration of the business spirit into the church" (Berger, Sense of Power 195). Though unable to share his wife's interest in Christian Science, Pat Maguire, for example, while at the height of his corrupt success in New York nevertheless professes to a kind of "faith in Christianity: he thought religion a good thing--for a woman--and he urged [his wife] to come to church with him." "Not a professed adherent of any" particular church or denomination, Maguire prefers to "keep an open mind on the subject, like a mugwump voter between elections," but, as he explains to Lottie, he does have a special fondness for Catholicism, and in particular, for its belief in purgatory:

> Take an ordinary every-day sort of man like myself, for instance. I know I'm plenty good enough for New York, but I'm not that conceited as to think I'm just fit for heaven at a moment's notice. On the other hand, I don't know that I'm bad enough to take any real enjoyment out of the bottomless pit. . . . Now a Baptist preacher would have no hesitation; he'd burn me up for ever and ever. I don't think that would be quite fair. But the priest would say to me, "Come on, Pat, and we'll smelt out of you all these little discrepancies that are very useful in New York, but for which there's no call at all at all in Paradise, and when that's done you can take your robe and trot upstairs." It's just like a man going into a Turkish

> bath and coming out a clean citizen with a white sheet around him. (457)

Perhaps a more striking example of business and religion curiously and inappropriately mixed is present in The Victors' Ben McAllister. McAllister's path to success, unlike Maguire's, is straight and narrow--at the start of his journey, indeed, he had "tak[en] God into partnership" (110) with him. "It might be supposed," therefore, suggests the narrator, "that a man so thoroughly religious as McAllister would have been a constant church-goer, but such was not the case.":

> He no more thought of attending service than of connecting himself with a night school and and redemonstrating the problems of Euclid. He knew that every proposition in Euclid could be proven, so where was the practical advantage of going over the ground again? Nothing any preacher in New York might say could add to his already overwhelming faith. Besides, his relations with his maker were too intimate and direct for him to accept mere human intervention. It was one of his principles in business never to deal with a subordinate when he might hold communication with the head of the firm. . . . In religion likewise, McAllister always went to headquarters, and the church he looked upon as a mere sub-agency. Sunday was to him literally a day of rest; a day to rise late; . . . a day when it was better, perhaps, not to think of business, yet, as the Lord was a partner, these thoughts need not be excluded. (398)

Barr's scorn of such religious hypocrisy, of religion in the crass service of a base materialism, is, of course, quite in keeping with imperialism's ideas of social concern and reform. Unlike most other imperialists, however, Barr in his criticism or satire of religion did not stop there; he also satirized puritanical religion in the service of the traditional, conservative order, and, most revealing of all, he satirized the religious mind which sought to find God's providential hand in contemporary social problems.

Barr's contempt for the Toronto Normal School in The Measure of the Rule, for example, is not just a reflection of his concern for the school's academic regimentation; it is also a reflection of his concern for the school's puritanical social and sexual repression. The novel is in part a romance, and, in fact, much of the book follows Prentiss's secretive attempts to see the woman he loves, Aline Arbuthnot, a fellow student at the co-educational Normal School.[16] These attempts are secretive because they are in violation of the school's severest rule: the student men and women of the school, on the threat of expulsion, are forbidden to communicate with each other whatsoever and wheresoever; not so much as a young man lifting his hat to a young women, as a "simple an act of courtesy" (62), is permitted, on campus or off campus. For, as Dr. Darnell, the school Head, explains in anticipation of objections from "thoughtless persons [who] think the rule absurd," the school stands "in loco parentis to" its young women, "most of whom are in a large city for the first time, away from home and friends" (151). Barr, of course, is among those who find the rule absurd. When, near the end of the term, the school authorities learn that a number of the class, Prentiss included, have been regular transgressors of the rule, and expulsions seem imminent, Prentiss and the entire student body must endure Dr. Darnell's bitter jeremiad:

> Never shall I forget the ringing accusation of [Dr. Darnell's] words from Jeremiah, "So has he dealt treacherously with me," and his culminating thunder in the last verse of the chapter, "We lie down in our shame and our confusion covereth us, for we have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God," and for the moment he almost made me believe that the drastic rule of the Normal School was made by the Lord, and not by a body of fussy old gentlemen in high places, who had forgotten their own youth, and never suspected they were contravening the will of the Almighty as expressed in the impulses of His creatures. (268)

In Barr's estimation, such religious repressiveness is not only unnatural and unchristian but also antithetical to both education and progress, as an incident (a humourous one, but a seriously revealing incident nevertheless) early in the novel suggests. Well before he has even heard of the Toronto Normal School, Prentiss, new to the city and in need of company, finds his way to the Toronto chapter of a lodge to which he belongs, and, upon joining the members at a dinner there, finds himself seated next to Dr. Darnell.[17] Prentiss, as do most other lodge members, finds the Doctor intimidating. "Never before," he says, "had I met a man who made me feel so absolutely worthless." "Despondent and gloomy" as a result, and certain, moreover, that he is "going to fail in the city," Prentiss, who has never before "tasted any beverage that was intoxicating in its nature," drinks several glasses of Rhine wine. Emboldened by the liquor, he attempts an after-dinner speech, the subject of which is the dour dinner companion seated next to him. Having gathered only that Darnell (who is a Doctor of Divinity) is a clergyman in the city, but having also heard a vague suggestion that he is or has been in some way connected with an educational institution (Prentiss guesses that he must have been a schoolteacher, "for many of our ministers had graduated from the teacher's desk" [16]), Prentiss's drunken oration, as a member who witnesses the event tells him the next day, "was [a] masterly" "comparison of the teacher and the preacher": "Of course, as you said, the future of the nation rests with the teacher, and not with the preacher. The one works with humanity at a malleable age, the other attempts to influence those whose characters and opinions are hardened and fixed" (24-5). The wine speaks truth, implies Barr, truth about education, truth about progress, and truth about religion's restrictive hold upon each.

The religious satire of The Mutable Many, however, perhaps best shows the extent to which Barr's thought on religion differs from that of other Canadian imperialists of the period. The religious satire of that novel is effected mostly through Mrs. Sartwell, who plays a kind of puritan Mrs. Sparsit to Sartwell's utilitarian (though more humane) Bounderby. Her character and religious attitude are conveniently revealed in a letter she writes to her step-daughter, who is away at boarding school, on the subject of a fire which has destroyed part of the factory that Sartwell manages and which has taken the lives of two workers:

> My Poor Dear Edna:
> You will doubtless have heard of the dreadful calamity that has overtaken the business of Monkton & Hope, a calamity from which I fear it may never recover; although your father, as usual, scoffs at what I predict, and says they are fully insured. . . . There seems little doubt that the fire was caused by some of the disaffected men, exasperated, probably, by the treatment they have received, although that is no excuse for the crime. But we are all short-seeing, misguided creatures here below, with the taint of original sin in each of us; unable, unless directed by a Higher Power, to take even the slightest action that will be acceptable; and prone ever to slip and stumble if we neglect those warnings which for our benefit are showered on the just and the unjust

> alike: but if warnings are passed by--or, worse still, scoffed at--how can we hope to profit by them and mend our ways, as an ever-indulgent Providence . . . intended they should--and when I asked your father in a most gentle and respectful . . . way if the fire had not pointed out a great moral to him, he said with most regrettable flippancy--which I have sometimes attempted to correct in you, my poor child!--that it pointed the moral to be well insured and to have fire-escapes from the upper floors. . . .
>
> I shall continue to petition for you both, for [God's] mercy is unfailing and unlimited.
>
> Your loving but sorrowing mother,
> Sarah Sartwell.
>
> (266-7)

Mrs. Sartwell's letter is ironically juxtaposed in the novel with another letter that immediately follows it, this one, on the same subject as the first, from Mr. Sartwell to his daughter. An accurate reflection of Barr's mind, the second letter, while it does not entirely reject ideas of divine intervention and providence, indirectly shows Barr the pragmatic realist convinced, not of God's power, but of man's power and of the power of economic sense to effect the only meaningful change and improvement in social conditions:

> My Dear Little Girl:
>
> I should have written days ago, but . . . the older I grow the more I dislike writing with my own hand. Worried? Oh, dear no! Why should one worry? I'm afraid your belligerent old father still loves a fight, whether with circumstances or with men. Before the fire was out, telegraphic orders were

> despatched to three machinery firms in the North. While the fire-engines were still flinging water on the ruins, I had secured a lease of the four houses that adjoin the works, had compounded with the tenants, and sent them packing. That night men were at work knocking doorways through the partitions and strengthening the floors. The new secretary of the Union proposed a conference with me . . . [and] got up a deputation of my own men and sent them to me. I received them, of course, and they asked me if I would give them fifteen per cent of their wages while out of work. "No," said I, "I can always do better than the Union. There will be one hundred per cent of the wages, not fifteen; I expect you all back at the works on Monday.". . . Work will be going on as usual within a week. . . . The new factory which is now begun will be built in accordance with modern ideas, and I expect to be able to increase our business. . . . I'm glad you wrote about your step-mother's letter, although I hope you will not take too seriously any half-hysterical comments on my tyrannical conduct. A man must act, and one who acts is bound to make mistakes. . . . I don't think [that I have made any], but your step-mother does, and, as facts always embarrass her, she sees instant starvation and all the rest of it. Everything, Edna, depends on the point of view. A lighted match is dropped by accident or design, and, falling on inflammable material, certain chemical changes take place . . . and a factory goes down in ruins to supply the materials for combustion. . . . All this seems perfectly natural to me, and in accordance with established scientific research. But your step-mother's point of view is different. She sees the finger of Providence. . . . Now, I've as great a belief and trust in Providence as any one, but to me Providence works sanely. It doesn't

> destroy a factory and kill two men merely to show me I'm in error, because it could accomplish its purpose at much less expense and trouble. . . . I hope to . . . see you on Saturday, and meanwhile all the sympathy you have to spare, lavish on that iron-handed tyrant,
>
> Your father
>
> (269-70)

At the centre of the imperialism of most late Victorian Canadian imperialists was a religious "sense of mission" that, as Berger says, idealistically looked forward to the "Christianization of the social order" (Sense of Power 186); at the centre of Barr's thought, however, there appears no such sense of mission. In his social and religious thought at least, Barr is more like the empiricists of the period, who, as Shortt says, reveal a "metaphysical vacuum at the core of their thought." Like the empiricists, Barr "stress[ed] reality as it was rather than as it might be"--Sartwell in The Mutable Many clearly suggests as much. The manager's quick response to the factory fire, indeed, shows the empiricist, bureaucratic mind in action. It is a mind which, as Wiebe says of its emergence in America, believed that "a society in flux always contained that irreducible element of contingency, and predictability really meant probability. Thus the rules, resembling orientations much more than laws, stressed techniques of constant watchfulness and mechanisms of continuous management" (145). And while the benefit of such a narrow view of reality was an ability "to devise technical solutions to immediate social problems,"--Sartwell's quick response to the fire has its immediate, practical benefits--the disadvantage of such a view was its inability "to confront the underlying issues which gave rise to specific problems." For example, "labour and capital . . . rarely appeared in bureaucratic analysis," says Wiebe, and "when they did, they designated definite groups of employees and employers who could, if necessary, be seen, felt, measured, and weighed" (146). "Where the idealists appeared dogmatic," as Shortt says, "the empiricists were directionless, applying their methodology in an ad hoc fashion"; in their narrow view, they "were trapped in an inertia which precluded ever guiding society toward an ideal goal" (144).

Barr, in a way, seems to have had an uneasy sense of the limitations of empiricism, and, in fact, his writing in places offers strange testimony to this unease. At the end of The Mutable Many, the manager Sartwell is no doubt the victor and, in Barr's estimation, a modern hero, efficient yet fair, pragmatic yet humane, self-reliant yet conscious of the plight of others. Yet Sartwell is not, it seems, the complete hero: in the final third of the novel another figure emerges, from the sub-plot, to vie, with both Sartwell and Marsten, for the reader's attention and recognition. That figure, odd as it may seem, is an artist (of sorts), Barney Hope, and his place in the novel is as the protagonist of a sub-plot that is equally as odd in a novel of "gritty social realism" (MacKendrick, introduction xi). The wealthy, self-centred but good-natured son of the factory owner, Hope has studied art in bohemian Paris, or rather, he has learned how to put "certain colours on canvas" (33). His lack of talent, however, is not an obstacle to him, and, indeed, by the novel's end he has bought his way to fame as painter of modern abstract art. He would be a figure of laughable idiocy were it not for the fact that Barr clearly admires him: he begins to dominate the concluding portions of the novel, becoming a figure of artistic or cultural noblesse oblige, generously hiring the services of, and commissioning pieces from, one destitute working class pianist, and dispensing money to the family of another.

In one other of Barr's novels, of course, does the artist figure become strangely prominent in a way that limits the novel's success: Tom Prentiss in The Measure of the Rule, as we have already noted, foregoes plans to become either an engineer or a teacher in Canada and instead, in the novel's final chapter, leaves for Paris to become an artist. Though a flaw of the work, the novel's conclusion in Paris is not entirely unprepared for. Prentiss's new avocation comes to him midway through the novel, that is, midway through his educational career at the Normal School.

His ambition to become a civil engineer having already been blocked by a Canadian university resistant to progress, and his drifting into the Normal School having shown him, from the inside, the repressive and regressive state of education in Canada, Prentiss, uncertain of his future, wanders aimlessly into the Normal School's picture gallery. "A potential civil engineer entered that gallery," the narrator observes from his vantage years later, and "a potential painter came out. The man who went in might, perhaps, have proved a useful individual, for his hard, healthy life would have been laid in the wilderness, by forest and stream, far from civilization; the future of the man who came out was to be Paris, Rome, London, and New York" (141). Moreover, it is while he is in the gallery that Prentiss first speaks with Aline Arbuthnot and, in willful defiance of the measure of the Normal School's rule, decides that he will continue to converse with her. "The visit to the picture gallery [thus] result[s] in [both] a change of mind as well the breaking of rules" (189) for which Prentiss ultimately suffers the expulsion that forces a dramatic change in his future. Nor is Prentiss's decision for art and for European culture, however weakly prepared for, entirely out of character: it had been the prospect of becoming part of a young nation's progress and prosperity, certainly, that prompted his earlier decision to leave the temporary teaching post in the backwoods of Canada, but that earlier decision had also been confirmed by a chance encounter with civilization or culture, that is, with the engineer who had recited from Twain's Innocents Abroad for Prentiss, opening the young teacher's eyes to "several points overlooked by [his] ancient comrade, Euclid" (5). And given both the Puritanical repressiveness--the lack of educational and cultural sophistication--and the shattering of the dreams and ideas of Canadian progress that his experience in Toronto has presented him with, the move to the freedom and culture of Europe should not completely surprise.

For, of course, Barr himself had left Canada, to attempt to make his success, not as a painter, but as a writer; but also, it would seem, to try to become part of a wider, freer, more modern and cosmopolitan culture than that which Canada could offer. And in the latter attempt, too, it seems he was successful. As MacKendrick notes, Barr's "considerable financial success" as an editor and writer

> enabled him to build his home, "Hillhead," in Woldingham, Surrey, in sight of Stephen Crane's Ravensbrook Villa at Oxted and, later, within walking distance of Crane's Brede Manor. He was a frequent guest at Crane's, along with such figures as George Gissing, Henry James, and Joseph Conrad, and was a familiar of Arthur Conan Doyle. . . . Crane, Barr, and the writer Harold Frederic . . . comprised a trio which played cards, exchanged "yarns," and roistered at "Baron Brede's." (introduction ix)[18]

And in his connection with the The Idler, too, Barr showed this cultural interest, showed, moreover, signs of being something of a late Victorian aesthete. If the present study has left the impression of The Idler as a political magazine, that impression is an erroneous one. Begun in 1892 with co-founder Jerome K. Jerome, Barr's Idler from its inception to its demise in 1911 was a gentleman's magazine of culture and leisure, its object, as Barr once put it, the "exercising [of] a soothing influence upon a tired mind" (editorial, Idler Oct. 1902, 122), the "radiat[ing of] happiness on the installment plan" (editorial, Idler Oct. 1902, 123). The magazine, as MacKendrick describes it,

> carried serialized novels, poems, articles on literature and theatre, memoirs, an "Idler's Club" of repartee, and short fiction by an impressive array of contributors; these included Bret Harte, Sara Jeannette Duncan, Mark Twain, Israel Zangwill, Gilbert Parker, Rudyard Kipling, Arthur Conan Doyle, Grant Allen, Rider Haggard, and R. M. Ballantyne. Every Friday saw an "Idler at home" party [the "at home," it is worth noting, is a favorite social pastime of the artist Barney Hope in The Mutable Many, too] at the journal's offices on Arundel Street. (introduction viii-ix)

As we have seen, Barr himself frequently breaches his magazine's first commandment to remain light and apolitical, but when he does so, he does so with a humour which sometimes belies a trace of unease. He might use The Idler, for example, to assist the cause of imperialism, urging his readers to "take their passages to Canada" to counter the worrisome invasion by Americans, but after offering the suggestion he feels compelled to add that his readers should leave only after having left him with "a year's subscription, that they might not miss the magazine in their wanderings, for good reading is somewhat scarce in those backwoods" (editorial, Idler Nov. 1902, 250). Witty repartee no doubt this may be, but to a man who, like so many of the characters in his fiction, has become addicted to all that modern culture and civilization can offer, a man for whom, it seems, cultural erudition and sophistication in and of itself is an important value, the afterthought is more than a passing idle joke. Indeed, Barr himself seems to have been aware of his art-for-art's-sake interest in contemporary cosmopolitan culture; and he seems to have been aware, too, that such interest was in a way an odd interest, not entirely explicable nor entirely consistent with his serious political and social interests and concerns. In one Idler piece, for example, he noted his peculiar fascination with painters and he casually offered a passing reflection on the matter:

> I don't know why it is that I am so fond of the company of artists, for I never could draw anything but a salary, and have often had a difficulty in drawing that. Now that the troubadour has gone, the artist is about the only

> joyous, irresponsible being in this commercial age who doesn't care a hang. He can enjoy life on less money than even John D. Rockefeller himself. Wherever you find him the fare is good, the price cheap, and the neighbourhood attractive. (editorial, Idler Aug. 1906, 670)

If, as Shortt suggests, empiricism, in its "lack of [idealistic] preconceptions [,] . . . opened the door for the relativism characteristic" of the modern period (144), perhaps Barr is right in his self-analysis, and he is far more modern a writer than he seems or than he himself knows. For the latent aestheticism that Barr's passing reflection and his life and writings begin to reveal is a kind of cultural relativism, an understandable one, perhaps, in the context. In an era shorn of social, political, and religious idealism, art for its own sake may seem to offer a substitute idealism, although the most it can offer in reality is an ephemeral escape and hedonistic refuge from life's fears and concerns.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

"In attempting to expand the limits of truth," writes S. E. D. Shortt in the conclusion to his study of six Victorian Canadian intellectuals, "the nineteenth century had, paradoxically, destroyed what little certainty it once possessed" (138). Shortt's concluding observation is affirmed by the three Victorians considered in this study. As early as mid-century, even as the period stood restively in the calm before the Darwinian storm to follow, implies James De Mille in A Strange Manuscript, was the period leaving itself "open to [new] conviction" (145); in fact, suggests De Mille, the period's early flow of heterodox ideas had already seriously eroded the certainties of the past. His own orthodox conviction progressively being denied him, rationally or intellectually at least, and of too much intellectual integrity to insist dogmatically upon a return to that once steadfast conviction, De Mille can only offer warning in his novel of what he believes will be the spiritual and moral, social and political topsy-turveydom to come. Decades later, the late-century

"Social Crisis" having in many respects confirmed De Mille's fears, Agnes Maule Machar, in Roland Graeme: Knight, can be seen to be boldly redoubling the effort to preserve the certainties of the past, by reforming them for a modern age. Buoyed by the rejuvenated idealism of the late century, Machar, through the course of most of her novel, seems convinced that the speculative and materialist character of the period can be redeemed and rescued from its ominous evolutionary course by an idealism drawn emotionally and spiritually from the past; and she seems optimistic, moreover, that theological or intellectual justification for such a reconciliation of past and present can be found. Her new idealism, however, like the philosophical idealism which prompted it and upon which it in part depended, in fact rested upon insecure ground: by her novel's end she can at best only await a future as unclear and uncertain as that offered by the enemy of her idealistic convictions, evolutionary naturalism. And if Machar anticipated the dawn of a new, morally and spiritually reawakened age, her anticipation was in vain, or so Robert Barr, writing early in the new century and reflecting the late-Victorian Anglo-Canadian mind, would suggest. Though yet Victorian and conservative enough that he too values the moral and social stability of the past, Barr, in The Measure of the Rule and his other serious fiction, like De Mille and Machar in their fiction, is not prepared blindly to insist upon a return to an era rapidly disappearing and to a mind fast fading. Indeed, unlike the earlier writers, Barr may be in the Victorian period but he is of the new century, a man too much attracted, even if only cautiously at times, to the new age's liberalism and progressivism and even, it seems, to its cultural relativism, to go back.

It cannot be denied, therefore, that in some significant respects the fiction of these three writers, whether considered with an emphasis upon the historical perspective--literature as history--or with an emphasis upon the critical perspective--history as literature--is a failed fiction. If considered literature as history, or more specifically, literature as intellectual history, their fiction represents an unsuccessful history or a history of failure: largely unfulfilled were these writers' ideational hopes and attempts to reconcile the conflicting claims of the old era and a new age, to reconcile them not simply intellectually, but also practically--politically and socially, too, for example. And if considered history as literature, their fiction once again shows failure: witness only the problems of endings, the extent to which these writers are confounded in their attempts to find intellectually successful and aesthetically satisfying conclusions to their most serious literary endeavours. If the fiction frequently shows such failure of literary craft, however, that failure in large measure is an inevitable consequence of the history of failure, a history which, paradoxically, these writers then to their credit successfully reveal and portray. For as the intellectual historians have shown us, De Mille, Machar, and Barr were not alone in their frustrated efforts to the unite the old and the new, to smooth the rough transition between the two ages; and their fiction, thus, in many respects is a faithful record and representation of that failure. It is more faithful, perhaps, than if it had artificially bridged the gap, than if, in other words, the authors had satisfied themselves with only a superficial, unproblematical vision of the future completely disconnected from the period's real uncertainties. As from the vantage of the Victorian period these writers gaze across the chasm into the distance of the modern world, their gaze, if nervous, is yet unwavering. They may, like De Mille, shrink back in fear from the sight before them; they may, like Machar, try to fix their gaze still farther into the distance, in the hope of a happier scene; or they may, like Barr, cautiously begin the treacherous advance to the other side; but they do not for longer than a moment close their eyes to what lies ahead. And as a result, their vision, however coloured by such personal fears, hopes, and desires, is essentially an honest and accurate vision.

It is, moreover, a Canadian and a nationalist vision, again, not in its failure to see, but in its attempt to see, and in its attempt to articulate a future for Canada. However dated and outmoded to us might be, for example, the imperialism that in varying degrees and forms characterized all three of the writers, that imperialism, as Carl Berger has shown, "was one form of Canadian nationalism." Though imperialism was doubtless motivated "partly [by] a reactionary impulse to preserve," that preserving impulse was meant by imperialists to provide Canada with the direction and means to discover and assert her national and even international "sense of power" in the future (Sense of Power 259), in a new age and century. Thus, James De Mille's fretful anti-republicanism, his fear of modern spiritual and moral lethargy; Robert Barr's sometimes fulminating, sometimes satirically fulsome depictions of the destructive power of unchecked capitalism, and (more consistent with his own ultimate acceptance of the business calculus) his unstinting and unqualified celebration of Canada's future economic greatness; and Agnes Maule Machar's passionate social concern, driven by her zealous sense of imperial mission; all these sentiments and ideas have their inception and reason for being in a "profound emotional attachment to Canada" (Berger, Sense of Power 260), on the one hand, and, on the other, a wishful anticipation of Canada's future greatness. And while imperialism the political movement died with the Victorian period in Canada--"the First World War killed it," as Berger bluntly concludes (Sense of Power 264)--many of the attitudes, concerns, and ideas of the imperialists lived on; imperialism "touched upon so many of the permanent Canadian questions," says Berger, and thus "many of its constituent elements survived long after the cause with which they had been allied lost its relevance." For example, the attitude, shared in varying forms by all three writers considered in this study, "that American society was less stable and ordered than Canadian was far older than the movement for imperial unity and outlived it." So too lived on the idea, clearly present in Machar's thought and writing, "that Canada was to function as an interpreter between the United States and Great Britain." It lived on, "refashioned and reformulated" (Sense of Power 265), in the Canada of Mackenzie King, and, indeed, a form of it perhaps still lives on in this country's current international character and role, as mediator between the United States (and also, ironically, Great Britain) and the Commonwealth, for example, as middle power initiator of "North-South dialogue," and as broker and sometimes guardian of international detente and peace. Long outliving its imperialist formulation of it too, of course, is the special interest accorded modern social problems, a concern present in varying forms and degrees in the work of all three writers but Machar especially. The on-going interest in the amelioration of the social side-effects of urbanization and industrialization, of capitalism and technological progress, is a concern which, if not uniquely Canadian and if lacking the enthusiastic, hyper-zealous attention it once had, has nevertheless taken some noteworthy and uniquely Canadian forms in the twentieth century, from agrarian protest to Progressivism, from Social Credit to C.C.F., from "funny money" to Medicare.

Given such a continuity of questions and problems, and attempted answers and solutions, a continuity which at the very least suggests, in the words of S. F. Wise, a "body of assumptions uniquely Canadian" ("Sermon Literature" 255), we do well to investigate fully that continuity's intellectual heritage. There are, of course, a number of ways in which that heritage can be investigated. Intellectual historian Clarence Karr, for example, has suggested "three separate approaches to Canadian intellectual history: the more traditional history of ideas or, stated more correctly, ideas in history; the history of historiography; and culture" (434). As Karr also observes, however, the last of these three approaches, "the analysis of the Canadian cultural tradition," though, sadly, "the least practiced of all three" approaches, potentially has much of unique value to offer: "A country's culture, . . . taken as an independent body of historical literature or raw data, is able to provide an understanding and descriptive analysis of spirit and essence that may or may not be discovered elsewhere" (439-40). Karr furthermore insists that it is the intellectual historian, not the literary critic, who must embark upon such intellectual investigation of the cultural heritage, since "the literary critic often operates in a historical vacuum and concentrates on a close textual analysis and a preoccupation with symbol and myth which are potentially dangerous ground for the historian" (442). "In time," adds Karr,

> some historian will tackle Northrop Frye's concept of the "garrison mentality" and Margaret Atwood's "survival and victims" philosophy and even move onwards to the hostile wilderness, the sense of exile and romanticism in Canadian culture, but as historians they must constantly guard against simplistic definitions of the concept, avoid applying the simple, single concept to our complex society and defend something as a national phenomenon when it has universal application. (443)

Karr's concerns and cautions are certainly legitimate ones, but they are perhaps less a reflection of the essential methodological differences between his discipline and that of the literary critic than of Canadian literary criticism's long-standing unwillingness to become engaged in the close study of Canadian literature within its historical context; indeed, his observations regarding two of Canada's most influential literary figures and their critical theories perhaps suggest as much.

That long-standing unwillingness, moreover, is a critical omission that threatens to continue. Even if Canadian criticism is able to become freed from its essential anti- or a-historical preoccupation with the symbolical, psychological and mythological--or, more accurately, when it will become freed, for recently there have been clear signs that, as the noted critic W. J. Keith has observed, "thematic criticism is less strong than it once was" in Canada (7)--there will yet be the need consciously to direct Canadian criticism into historio-critical paths. For if the Canadian academic and critical establishment to date has been characterized by the attempts to formulate mytho-thematic systems and schemata, it has also, as T. D. MacLulich has argued, been characterized by a tendency to "fors[ake] the academy's usual" and "traditional archival and custodial tasks, [--such as, for example, the efforts to] . . . unearth[] and display[] . . . little-known texts by Canadian writers"--in favour of the tendency to "comment on the latest works by established writers, or to tout the work of new authors" (20). Indeed, Canadian criticism has long had a peculiar fascination with novelty and with new beginnings, and when, now, a moribund thematic criticism threatens to be overtaken by new, modernist and postmodernist critical approaches--the formalistic and semiotic literary analyses of structuralist and post-structuralist criticism--this strangely perennial interest in Canadian literature's newness promises once again to become an obstacle in the way of the attempt to discover a particularly Canadian literary heritage. Such new critical directions, as MacLulich observes, invite the avant-garde and the experimental (postmodern "metafiction" or "surfiction," for example) to become "the plaything of the literary specialists" (24), and vice versa; and thus both the writing of literature and the task of criticism risk becoming trivialized. But perhaps more importantly, as Professor Keith has warned, there is another, more "pressing--even . . . nationalistic--reason"

> why any full-scale concentration on postmodernist criticism in Canada needs to be resisted. . . . Not the least of limitations of thematic criticism was its neglect of historical continuities. Readers were invited to move spatially from one manifestation of theme to another without noticing any ordered progression or temporal development in the literature. Similarly, [postmodernist] approaches that emphasize the autonomy of the text are likely to be a-historical or even anti-historical in their general assumptions. . . . But only countries that are fully conscious of their history and have fully absorbed their heritage can afford to neglect it. Canada is in the process of discovering (or in some cases rediscovering) her past, her lines of continuity. It is essential that his process be not only maintained but extended. (12)

MacLulich has also observed the way in which modernist and postmodernist critical trends, in their foundation on a kind of modern aestheticism, are essentially non-national, international, or--and somehow this term seems now the most fitting--post-national. MacLulich suggests, moreover, that such internationalism shows these new critical directions to be less new than they might initially seem to be: such internationalism is remarkably similar to, and consistent with, the universalizing impulse of the earlier mythopoeic critical approaches, of the sort practiced by Northrop Frye, for example (26). Indeed, certain of Frye's observations about Canadian literature now may be beginning to take on a distinctly apocalyptic quality. "The writers of the last decade, at least," noted Frye in 1965, apparently without fear or regret,

> have begun to write in a world that is post-Canadian, as it is post-American, post-British, and post everything except the world itself. There are no provinces in the empire of the aeroplane and television, and no physical separation from the centres of culture, such as they are. Sensibility is no longer dependent on a specific environment or even on sense experience itself. ("Conclusion" 360)

MacLulich's concerns regarding this and other such non-nationalistic attitudes and critical directions are worth reflecting upon:

> Whatever the literary purists among us may like to think, the justification for isolating Canadian literature as a separate field of study is linked with a

> conviction of our cultural divergence from the United States. Simply to assert that the Canadian tradition contains everything that Canadian writers have published or will produce is not good enough. If we read Canadian works in a purely esthetic or purely "literary" way, then we ignore--and in effect we deny--their Canadianness. We then have no reason for grouping them in a separate category, and we should just sprinkle them back into the general academic menu (some to thicken Modern Fiction, others to flavour Modern Poetry, and the remaining few to garnish Modern Drama). (27-8)

Ironically, then, we come full circle: the current state of Canadian criticism itself--the new questions and concerns which, indirectly, it now raises--reminds us that such questions and concerns are not really new at all. It reminds us how little we have progressed, and perhaps how much we have regressed, since De Mille, Machar, Barr, and the Victorian era in Canada. It reminds us that we are what we have always have been. It reminds of what the Victorians were prepared to show us all along, that our identity is the most secure when we are most diligent about what threatens it.

Most of all, it reminds us of how much we must do before we begin to come into the full possession of ourselves. Essentially yet hidden from us is the diversity and complexity of the literature and ideas in Canada, and of the lines of connection and intellectual continuity among our thinkers and writers; between the writers and thinkers in the many sub-cultures, groups, and regions of Canada (east and west, native and ethnic, French and English); among the genres and kinds of literature and writing in Canada; and, ultimately, between the periods and centuries, from the writers and thinkers, lesser and greater, of the Victorian period (and before) to the thinkers and writers, lesser and greater, of our age. Essentially yet hidden from us, in other words, is our full history, our full literature, and our full literary history.

If the discovering of such lines of connection and continuity within and between our literature and history is our ultimate goal, however, clearly we must first continue the investigation of our literary, historical, and intellectual past. We must, for example, continue (in some cases) or begin (in most cases) to investigate the work of the lesser-known writers, and especially the fiction writers, of the Victorian era, and we must do so, moreover, in a way invites contact among or across the various disciplines engaged in Canadian studies. Works such as William Kirby's *The Golden Dog* (1877); Gilbert Parker's *The Seats of the Mighty* (1896) and other of his historical romances; Francis W. Grey's *The Cure of St. Philippe* (1899); the novels of Grant Allen, his *Philistia* (1884), for example, and *The Woman Who Did* (1895); Thomas Stinson Jarvis's *Geoffrey Hampstead* (1890); the works of Lily Dougall, her *Beggars All* (1891), *What Necessity Knows*

(1893), and *The Zeit-Geist* (1895), for example; the fiction of Ralph Connor, and especially his Glengarry novels, *The Man From Glengarry* (1901) and *Glengarry Schooldays* (1902); W. A. Fraser's *The Lone Furrow* (1907); Hugh Pedley's *Looking Forward: The Strange Experience of the Rev. Fergus McCheyne* (1913); these works and many others await serious and sustained study. While of sometimes uneven literary and intellectual quality, perhaps, such works nevertheless hold the promise both of showing the way in which Canadian ideas have shaped and defined the evolving forms of literature--and more specifically, of course, the novel--in Canada and of revealing the diversity of attitudes, ideas, and concerns that constitute the Anglo-Victorian Canadian mind and, by extension, the developing Canadian mind. Though a number of these works, for example, show aspects of the conservative imperialist-nationalism tradition and mind, others clearly do not: the work of Grant Allen, for example, (a writer who, like Robert Barr, lived and wrote in England while nevertheless maintaining contact the Canada of his youth) is remarkably liberal, indeed radical, in its ideas; and the fiction of Lily Dougall, with its interest in esoteric metaphysical ideas, has more in common with American transcendentalism than with Canadian conservatism. Moreover, as intellectual historians (Carl Berger included) have been careful to point out, the various ideas which historians have ascribed to, or considered within the context of, imperialism and the imperialist mentality--ideas, concerns, and attitudes such as the critique of the republic, loyalism, militarism, racism, the agrarian myth, social problems and the social gospel--have contexts other than imperialism as well, sometimes contexts "far removed" from imperialism (Karr 437); and those ideas, thus, await investigation both in themselves and in terms of those other contexts. "At no time should a generalization in intellectual history," as Karr has warned, and his warning applies as well to the study of ideas in literary context, "be at the expense of the complexity of Canadian society" (437). For only once we have begun to see that complexity, will we be able to say with confidence that we have begun to see ourselves.

NOTES

Chapter 1: Introduction

[1] There does not seem to have been in Canada the equivalent of the English Edwardian period; therefore, this study includes (as, for example, McKillop has done) the years before the First World War within the Victorian period in Canada.

[2] The judgement, however, has been challenged by intellectual and cultural historians, who have taken Machar and her ideas seriously. See especially Brouwer, Vipond, and Cook (186-92).

Chapter 2: James De Mille

[1] Kilian's use of the term "symposium" to denote the four Victorian gentleman who discover, read, and comment upon the strange manuscript is appropriate and convenient; the present study will make use of the term, as well.

[2] See Cogswell, "Literary Activity" 127; George Woodcock, "Utopian Vision" 175. See also La Bossiere 43 and Gerson 210-11 for a summary of the various atecedents and sources that have been named.

[3] The latter part of Woodcock's contention, that certain aspects of Victorian romanticism are at the core of De Mille's Kosekin civilization and his satire, is very likely true. Romantic elements are perhaps most clearly evident in the Kosekin cult of poverty. In the inverted world of the Kosekin, those who endure the greatest hardship and who enjoy the least materially, the classes of paupers and labourers, for example, are the highest, most honoured, and most respected. Indeed, in a passing comment that may have in mind the literary Romantics, and even more specifically perhaps, Wordsworth's peasant "borderers," we learn that such inverted social hierarchy, revolutionary in real Victorian terms but the established order in Kosekin terms, is cherished by Kosekin poets who in their works "celebrate street-sweepers, scavengers, lamp-lighters, laborers, and above all, paupers" (137). Evident in Kosekin attitudes towards child-rearing is perhaps another echo of Wordsworth, and in particular, of his use of the child-figure in poetic attempts to blur distinctions between life and death, mortality and immortality. The Kosekin ideal of love, of course, is love which is non-consummated (to consummate love is to satisfy selfish desire). Though they therefore disapprove of married love, the Kosekin encourage loveless marriage, and De Mille ingeniously is able to circumvent the problem of how his fictional race propagates itself. To the

Kosekin, however, propagation is not merely a necessary evil, but rather is something rejoiced for, "since those who are born will one day gain the bliss of death" (137). What to Wordsworth and like-minded Romantics is the ideal of life dedicated (in the words of Wordsworth's Immortality Ode) to "vanishings" from the world "of sense and outward things," to the "glory" and the "dream" beyond mortal life, seems in the satiric context of this novel to be simply the absurd illogic of being born and living merely for nothingness and death. Nevertheless, it is important to realize that far more than Victorian romanticism explains the peculiarities of the Kosekin people and world; so extreme a self-denial as the Kosekin show, for example, is hardly a truly romantic characteristic. For another aspect of De Mille's attitude toward Romanticism, see also 42-4, below.

[4] Woodcock's argument here would seem to be supported by Camille La Bossière, who has observed that "the principal subtext or conceptual referent" of De Mille's satire may well be The Beatitudes of Christ's Sermon on the Mount (47); and, indeed, the Kosekin certainly do heap blessings on the poor, the meek, and they that mourn.

[5] The extremes to which Woodcock takes his interpretation of De Mille's novel is as much as anything, perhaps, an indication of the critic's own historical and intellectual biases. A decided hint of modern or modernist arrogance creeps into Woodcock's writing when, for example, he presumptuously concludes that, "to those who considered themselves enlightened and rational, as De Mille undoubtedly did, much of the Old Testament-oriented religion of their age seemed motivated by a deliberate obscurantism, a turning away from light into a longed-for darkness" ("Utopian Vision" 178). Woodcock would have us assume De Mille's modern sensibility and vision--the assumption is a necessary prerequisite, it often seems, to a writer or work's being welcomed into the canon of major Canadian writers and works--and would have us assume also a presumably enlightened, sensible, and clear rejection of traditional belief, faith and values on the part of the author. Such assumptions, however, simply are not borne out by contextual analysis of the novel and its writer.

[6] According to MacMechan, James De Mille "was the first to add the French-looking 'e' to the Dutch Demill" family name (the family, says MacMechan, was descended from the DeMiltz family of New York), and, adds MacMechan, he "was laughed at in St. John" for making the change (409-10).

[7] Behind the Veil--a late work, is the prevailing consensus--was found among the De Mille papers after the

author's death and was prepared for its 1893 posthumous publication by Archibald MacMechan.

[8] The Gay Science was first published in 1882, two years after De Mille's death, but the full context of this one occurrence of Nietzsche's famous statement (the pronouncement appears in three separate sections of the book) is strangely and coincidentally interesting when considered in relation to De Mille's novel about a cave-dwelling people who worship (as the present study will make clear) a No-God: "After Buddha was dead, his shadow was still shown for centuries in a cave--a tremendous, gruesome shadow. God is dead; but considering the state the species Man is in, there will perhaps be caves, for ages yet, in which his shadow will be shown."

[9] See Parks, introduction xvii-lix. In his attempt to fix the novel's date of composition for his introduction to this recent edition of A Strange Manuscript, Parks is the first to consider, not only the novel's geological and paleontological references, but to consider those references in the particular context of the author's life and the contemporary Victorian Canadian debate "between, on the one hand, the new vision of the history of the earth and evolutionary change demonstrated by geologists and, on the other, the old vision of nature and divine providence founded upon the authority of the Scriptures and buttressed by centuries of exegesis" (xxix). Observing such things as De Mille's evangelical upbringing, his subsequent move to Anglicanism, and his close fifteen-year association with his Dalhousie colleague George Lawson, Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy and a man who remained a devout Christian throughout the evolutionary debate, Parks concludes that De Mille would have had "an almost professional interest in the challenging ideas put forward by scientists" and "that he would have been on the side of the anti-Darwinists." Parks' introduction, moreover, attempts a thorough explanation of the likely sources for the novel's references to Victorian scientific discoveries and theory. Perhaps the introduction and, indeed, the appearance of an authoritative text of De Mille's novel signal both a renewed, sustained interest in the novel and a new critical emphasis in the study of the novel.

[10] In his editor's introduction to the C.E.E.C.T. edition of A Strange Manuscript, Parks essentially affirms this earlier conclusion. In the introduction, Parks argues that De Mille's "text offers no trustworthy internal evidence for a date of composition" (xix). He adds that on the basis of external evidence, however,--again, primarily the Alfred De Mill letter to Dr. John Pryor--the composition

of the novel "can be assigned to the mid- to late 1860s," and that "the existence of the complete novel in manuscript by no later than the mid-1870s is . . . beyond dispute" (xx). The present study does not reject the latter conclusion, but, for reasons that will become evident, does argue for the strong possibility of an earlier date or period of conception and composition.

[11] In addition to the Richard Owen's book, De Mille also drew heavily, says Parks, upon Hugh Miller's 1857 work, The Testimony of Rocks; Geology in its Bearings on the Two Theologies, Natural and Revealed, a book which, as its sub-title suggests, attempted "to defend scriptural truth from what [its author] regarded as fallacious and dangerous interpretations of geological discoveries." Both the Miller and Owen books, says Parks, were popular works, and although De Mille may have made some use of some more specialized and extensive sources, his heavy dependence on these two books, contends Parks, suggest that "De Mille was not widely read in palaeontology and geology" "despite his interest in science and his friendship with scientists" (introduction xxxi).

[12] Parks points out that De Mille "was indeed sometimes careless of exact chronology in both his main narrative and the frame story." For example, "one glaring error," according to Parks, is made by Adam More (whose last contact with the known world, we must remember, is not 1850, the year the symposium sets sail, but 1844, the year More is separated from his ship): "his reference to the great philanthropist George Peabody [247]," says Parks, "is made nearly two decades before Peabody became famous for benefactions" (introduction xviii-xix). Most of the novel's other anachronisms, a number of which are the result of De Mille's reliance on works, primarily by Richard Owen and Hugh Miller, that postdate 1850 by five or more years, are relatively minor, in Parks' estimation, and would not have been spotted by the "ordinary reader." As for the novel's explicit reference to evolutionary theory, Parks notes only one in the novel, an exchange between Congreve and Oxenden on the eyeless fishes of the Kentucky Mammoth Cave (149-50), an exchange behind which, observes Parks, "lies . . . Lamarck's basic evolutionary thesis" (introduction xxx). The reference shows De Mille's particular awareness of, and interest in, the pre-Darwinian evolutionary argument, according to Parks, and also suggests De Mille's awareness that explicit reference to Darwin's evolutionary theory would have been obviously anachronistic. Parks is right, but his consideration of the lack of explicit reference to Darwinian evolutionary theory nevertheless begs the question of why De Mille then chose to set so topical a novel, on

such topical and contentious speculations and arguments, in 1850 and not, say, in 1860 or in 1865, that is, after the 1859 publication of Darwin's Origin. Once again, it seems likely that De Mille had conceived and also mostly written A Strange Manuscript before the full fury of the Darwinian storm reached the shores of North America. It could be argued, of course, that, even if most of the novel was written prior to 1859, De Mille, should he have so wanted, had the opportunity after 1859 to revise his work in order to make it yet more current. We must remember, however, that the novel was not completed to De Mille's satisfaction and that the matter of if, when, how, and how much De Mille revised or yet wanted to revise his novel is itself also a matter of considerable doubt and not a little speculation.

[13] Indeed, were we apply to De Mille and A Strange Manuscript the critical criteria that, for example, Yvor Winters, in Forms of Discovery, uses to evaluate the Renaissance poet George Herbert and his art, the achievement of the novelist and his work would become all that much more apparent. The greatness of Herbert's devotional poem "Church Monuments," according to Winters, is largely achieved because, "although we know that Herbert was a devout Christian, there is nothing explicitly Christian in the poem, no reference to any exclusively Christian doctrine or attitude. The poem deals with the vanity of life and the necessity of preparing for death." The poem, therefore, concludes Winters, "stands somewhat aside from most of the devotional poetry of the Renaissance [,] and [it] certainly [stands] aside from most of the poetry of George Herbert," which all too often falls into "abject cliches" and sometimes into a "cloying and almost infantile pietism" (Winters, Forms of Discovery 86-8). In a similar way, too, can De Mille's achievement be recognized.

[14] MacLeod cautions against "overestimating De Mille's financial stability," even in the few years preceding the author's death. He points out, for example, the financial situation regarding a house that the De Mille family had purchased in 1876 (prior to that year, the De Milles lived in a rented home). At the time of its purchase, $3000.00 was left owing on the house, an amount which De Mille agreed to pay within a year. "When he died in January, 1880, the full amount was still owed," says MacLeod; "the residence," he adds, "was sold by Mrs. De Mille in 1908 for $5,500.00, a good part of which went to pay off the original debt" (90).

[15] See, for example, Cameron. For a consideration of Leacock from the point of view of Canadian intellectual history, see Berger "Other Mr. Leacock" and Sense of Power.

Chapter 3: Agnes Maule Machar

[1] The term scientific naturalism, according to historian Frank Miller Turner, is perhaps the most comprehensive and accurate term to describe the pervasive empiricist spirit of the Victorian era; the term, according to Turner, is "more inclusive" than other terms (such as Comtism, positivism, scientism, free thought, for example) that have been used to denote the increasingly empiricist tenor of the age. See Turner 11ff.

[2] For more than half a century, Machar was a prolific contributor of articles not only, but also of poetry, fiction, reviews, and letters, to a number of important periodicals, British and American (Scribner's, The Century, and The Westminster Review) as well as Canadian. Machar was an especially frequent contributor to two important Canadian periodicals, The Canadian Monthly and National Review (and its successor, Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly and National Review) and, after the demise of the Canadian Monthly in 1882, to Goldwin Smith's The Week. Machar was, then, as Carole Gerson has said, "at the centre of Canadian intellectual life"; indeed, she was "sometimes considerably to the left of centre," adds Gerson in response to those "today . . . [who] dismiss . . . Machar as a second-rate, didactic writer" (204). Also, as one would expect of a writer so actively engaged--and for so long--in the period's currents of ideas, Machar was not a static thinker. Although she was constant in her defense of the Christian faith and throughout her life decried the materialism that she felt was the base foundation of the period's scientific naturalism, her writing of the period following 1880 shows, as Ruth Compton Brouwer has observed, that Machar "became increasingly convinced that interpretations of scripture and the Christian revelation must alter if intellect and faith were not to be forever polarized" ("'Between-Age' Christianity" 354). Since the present study of Machar has as its particular concern Machar's attempt, in her 1892 novel, Roland Graeme: Knight, to effect a reconciliation of the conflicting claims of faith and intellect, her contributions to The Week in the last two decades of the century are of special interest and significance.

[3] Machar,"Impressions," pt. 2, 1138; quoting address to the parliament by the American author and Unitarian minister Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

[4] Perhaps the most notable exceptions are Machar's contributions to a debate, primarily with Ottawa controversialist and positivist W. D. LeSueur, on the subject of prayer and its efficacy in the modern age. The

debate, an on-going one, appeared in issues of the Canadian Monthly and National Review between the years 1875 and 1882. See especially: Rev. of Christian Prayer; Machar: "Prayer for Daily Bread," "Prayer and Modern Doubt," "Prayer and Christian Belief," "Divine Law of Prayer"; Le Sueur: "Prayer and Modern Thought," "Prayer and Natural Law"; Dawson: "Prayer and Modern Science"; Romanes: "Physical Efficacy of Prayer." Intellectual historian Ruth Compton Brouwer, assessing the quality of Machar's part in the debate, concludes that she "advanced some inadequately reasoned, perhaps desperate, arguments that could not be satisfactorily sustained even within her own terms of reference, and . . . [these] LeSueur speedily demolished"; Brouwer also notes, however, LeSueur's contention that, of "the various responses given to his position, that of 'Fidelis' [Machar] was . . . the most satisfactory." ("'Between-Age' Christianity" 349-50).

[5] Machar here appears to be making particular ironic reference to T. H. Huxley's speculations (as McKillop has summarized them) on "protoplasm as the physical basis of life." See McKillop, A Disciplined Intelligence (154ff), on the subject of Canadian Christian apologists' ridicule of such "materialistic" speculations.

[6] In an age in which scientific theories are generally beyond popular comprehension, we may be tempted to question Machar's ability to understand and evaluate Romanes' scientific writing and thought. As Frank Miller Turner has observed, however, the late Victorian period "marked what would appear to be the last era when the essential theories of science could be understood by the layman without training in advanced mathematics" (12).

[7] qtd in Machar, rev. of The Life of Professor George John Romanes, by Ethel Romanes 1100; also qtd in "Late George J. Romanes" 753. Romanes' "A Candid Examination of Theism" and another of his essays, "A Candid Examination of Religion," were together published posthumously in 1895 in a book, edited by Charles Gore, called Thoughts on Religion.

[8] Admittedly, Machar's suggestion here of the evolutionary nature of Graeme's struggle is based on a highly oversimplified, likely popularized, understanding of Darwinian theory. To some degree, however, Machar seems to be aware of this too superficial use of evolutionary theory; indeed, to some degree she needs it for the ironic chastening of the idealistic Graeme that takes place at the novel's end. At the novel's end, Graeme, discouraged by what he has failed to accomplish in the way of social reforms and reflecting on those failures, comes to the

recognition that "the mills of God grind slowly" (284). See below, 176.

[9] See McKillop on "John Watson and the Secret of Hegel" (181-95).

[10] It should be emphasized, too, that this paradoxical combination of both a belief in, and a fear of, progress--a combination, indeed, of individualism and social determinism--is not only a mark of the social criticism of those imperialists (such as Machar and Grant) whose imperialist fervour was combined with a zeal for the mission of the social gospel. The paradox is present also, for example, in the social thought of a writer such as Stephen Leacock (whose ideas of social justice generally are similar to those of Machar). Though a committed imperialist, Leacock was not, of course, a social gospel writer. Yet he, too, as Alan Bowker has noted, "condemn[ed] the results of the age of progress and believe[d] in progress at the same time." "Some have suggested," notes Bowker, that this apparent contradiction is simply "an unresolved conflict in a supremely eclectic mind." In Bowker's estimation, however, the contradiction is indeed a paradox, and not a "strange" one: "while he believed in the possibility of [social] progress, Leacock did not see it as automatic. Men had to make their own world." Bowker also suggests that the "mixed feelings" evident in Leacock's social criticism are perhaps a defining feature "of that curious and perhaps indigenously Canadian species which had been given the name of 'Red Tory'" (xxxiiiff). Indeed, it can be argued that this paradoxical combination of individualistic and deterministic ideas has become a feature of more than just Canadian Tory or imperialist thought and writing. Much of the poetry of E. J. Pratt, for example, as Sandra Djwa has argued, shows "ethical man assert[ing] his moral values in defiance of the amoral mechanism of the cosmos." With ideas of Darwinian evolutionism thus forming the basis of his view of nature and the cosmos, Pratt, according to Djwa, confronts "a modern crisis in sensibility[: w]ith the old standards of an established faith and an assured civilization crumbling all around, where is modern man to find his fixed guide for action?" For Pratt, says Djwa, stability "emerge[s] from a basically Christian re-interpretation of the historical past," from a "focusing on the Christ-like motive as it is embodied in the heroic acts of the individual" (1ff). The crisis that Pratt's poetry confronts may indeed be a modern one, but as its similarity to the social crisis confronted by Victorian imperialists suggests, this crisis and its confrontation is best viewed in a larger context and tradition.

[11] Abbot, a Congregationalist minister, was the long-time editor of Henry Ward Beecher's non-denominational weekly Christian Union (later renamed Outlook) and the author of a number of social gospel books, Christianity and Social Problems (1897), The Rights of Man (1901), The Spirit of Democracy (1910), and America in the Making (1911). Like both Machar and Grant, Abbot was theologically liberal in his attempt to interpret religious faith and commitment in light of contemporary scientific theory and discovery. Among the well-known figures (besides Lyman Abbot) included in Machar's circle of acquaintanceship were E. Pauline Johnson, the Canadian poet; Grant Allen, the ex-patriot Canadian novelist (whose sister married Machar's only brother John, a Kingston lawyer and committed supporter of the Knights of Labour); Richard Cartwright, the Ontario Liberal politician and free-trade advocate; John Greenleaf Whittier, the American Quaker poet, abolitionist and reformer; J. G. Holland, the editor of Scribner's; and Alfred Russell Wallace, the English naturalist who, independently of Darwin, had formulated a theory of evolution. See Guild 499-501; and Cumberland, "Agnes Maule Machar," Willison's Monthly 34-7.

[12] As Berger notes, Grant "interpreted the role of the ministry in terms of what he had seen in Scotland during his student days" (Sense of Power 26). In an article called "The Pulpit in Scotland as It Is, and as It Was Forty or Fifty Years Ago," Grant himself observed that Scotland in his student days was blessed with a "galaxy of preachers" of "altogether exceptional pulpit and spiritual power" who "were the real leaders of the Scottish people" (195). As for his assessment of the Scottish pulpit of his own day, Grant, in the same article (198ff), happily observed the extent to which that pulpit had freed itself from catechism, creeds, and "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" iterated in almost every sermon, in almost every church, on every Sunday. The liberated Scottish pulpit, thus, in Grant's estimation, now could understand the Bible as the "poetry and prophesyings of inspired men" (that is, as more than a "statute-book"); it could understand redemption as taking "the form of a long continued historical movement"; it could understand the need for preaching to be "practical"; and it could understand Christ as a "Person" (as well as a deity, that is) whose work was more than (or, perhaps, whose work included) the miraculous "work [of atonement] which is seen in His death."

[13] Considering Machar's ecumenicism, it is not surprising that the novel does not directly identify the church denominations of the ministers Chillingworth and Alden. We can assume, however, from her own church

affiliation and from her admiration of Grant, that Machar thinks of Alden as Presbyterian, at least originally. Chillingworth's denomination, by contrast, is indirectly identified in the novel; he is, it seems, Episcopalian (a denomination consistent, of course, with his English origin), for one of the novel's characters, Dr. Blanchard, although he is a parishioner of Mr. Alden, is described as having married "an Episcopalian wife" whose "family were parishioners of Mr. Chillingworth" (110). It should be noted, too, that the two ministers' names are suggestive. The name Chillingworth is part of a rather complex allusion to Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter. Like the Chillingworth of Hawthorne's novel, Machar's Chillingworth conceals, from the American community he currently lives, in a past life and a marriage in England. Unlike Machar's Chillingworth, however, Hawthorne's Chillingworth is not a preacher; yet there is also in Hawthorne's novel, of course, a minister--the Reverend Dimmesdale. And like Dimmesdale, who, unbeknownst to the Puritan community, is the father of Hester Prynne's daughter, Pearl, Machar's Chillingworth, also unbeknownst to his community, is the father of Mrs. Travers' daughter, Cecelia. There are, of course, other subtle (and intriguing) similarities and differences between the two works, but in general, it seems, Machar's Chillingworth combines aspects of both Chillingworth and Dimmesdale of Hawthorne's novel. While the allusion to Hawthorne's work seems clearly intended, the significance of the allusion is not straight-forwardly clear. Whatever may be its precise significance (if there is just one), the allusion nevertheless suggests some of the themes common to both works: the thematic conflict between Old World civilization and the New World Utopia, between traditional mores and restrictions and new freedoms and ideas; the thematic concern with moral deception, and with sin and guilt, and retribution and atonement; and the thematic interest in the individual's relationship and responsibilities to the community. The name Alden is also allusive. His name recalls, of course, not Puritan literature, but Puritan history, and more precisely, one of the founding fathers of the American Puritan community, John Alden, who, legend has it, was the first pilgrim to set foot on Plymouth Rock, and who was the patriarch of successive generations of important Puritan Americans. The allusion is appropriate, of course, since the Alden of Machar's novel is the symbolic representative of the start of a new spiritual community and, Machar hopes, a new spiritual age. Most importantly as far as Machar's literary reputation is concerned, the rich and complex allusiveness of these names suggests a literary craft, subtlety, and sophistication that few have been prepared to acknowledge Machar to be capable of showing.

[14] Berger notes that "there are many ways of suggesting" Grant's influence and stature, "including his presence at the [1893 Chicago] Congress of Religions . . . where he appeared as a major spokesman of Canadian Protestantism, but perhaps the best indication is a letter written to him by a troubled farmer. Of uncertain grammar, it dealt with transgressions and vagaries of the flesh. . . . [W]hat is so interesting is that on such a 'delicate subject' the youth consulted him because [, as the youth wrote,] 'I have read and heard so much of your superiority among the clergy of Ontario'" (Sense of Power 26).

[15] For the imperialists' critique of partyism, see Berger, Sense of Power 68-9, 199-207.

[16] The "living link" conception of Canada's international mission did not, of course, die with the imperialist movement. Prime Minister Mackenzie King, during the Second World War especially, conceived of Canada as a middle power mediator, a "linchpin," between the United States and Great Britain. For other parallels between King's thought and late-Victorian ideas, see n20, below.

[17] As Berger says, Grant "sought a middle course between the unjust and inadequate capitalist wage system and the socialist demand for the elimination of private property." Thus, "the conclusion to which Grant was driven did not involve wholesale institutional innovation nor any serious tampering with the capitalist system." Worthy of note, too, however, is the caution that Berger adds, a caution that should apply as well to any assessment of Machar's ideas: "If Grant's contentions appear rather naive to a different age which equates preaching with ineffectuality and is suspicious of the kind of reform which is addressed to the reformation of character as opposed to the redistribution of property, it should be kept in mind that the degree to which he believed in the possibility was the measure of his faith in the transforming power of Christianity. And it should be remembered too that in Canada in the early 1890s the idea that the church should deal with the capital-labour conflict at all was a revolutionary departure" (Sense of Power 184-5).

[18] The phrase is the title of Leo Marx's classic study of the pastoral myth in American culture, The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America. To understand the powerful attraction and influence of a similar myth or ideal in Canada, see Doug Owram's Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856-1900.

[19] McKillop, Disciplined Intelligence 215, quoting Passmore 52-3.

[20] Machar's anticipation of what has often been assumed to be essentially modern Canadian thought can be seen in the way in which many ideas similar to hers appear in the thought and writing of Mackenzie King. King's 1918 social and political analysis, Industry and Humanity, is particularly revealing in this regard. In this post-war prescription for twentieth-century problems, King argued--and did so, ironically, with a good deal less cynicism than did Machar in her novel two decades earlier--that the "ultimate solution" for "international and industrial problems" was a "universally accepted faith in human brotherhood" (xvii). Like Machar, King founded his optimistic social idealism on an essential dualism "between matter and spirit" (xvi); he urged his readers to consider that, so long as man recognizes the primacy of a "spiritual universe," a universe compelled to obey a "Law of Christian Service," he will not be "ordered and directed" by the materialistic "Law of the Survival of the Fittest" (125-6). Although King identified "spirit" with "Christian sacrifice and love," he clearly conceived of spirit, not simply in orthodox Christian terms (not surprisingly, considering his eventual interest in spiritualism), but in essentially secularized, humanistic terms: by spirit, King meant man's "true sense of his immortal destiny," (124); the "God-like in [man's] nature" (84); the progressively developing "human intelligence" which enabled "man, not nature, [to be] now in control" (103); "the law of human brotherhood" (125); in short, all ideals that tended to "promote the well-being of mankind" and "international good-will" (28). Paradoxically, however, King, like Machar, did not rule out the power of evolution in progressive human development. "Man as an isolated individual," concluded King, was not subject to "biological law," but "mankind as a whole," as a "social organism," was very much subject to that law. Mankind should not despair of that subjugation, however, for, King believed, as a social organism mankind was inevitably "best fitted to survive" its "mortal combat" (120) with non-human organisms. King's attempt to reconcile many of the same intellectual opposites that in her time Machar sought to reconcile, his attempt, like Machar's, to insist upon a renewed and reinvigorated idealism's ability to provide social meaning and direction, suggests that King, and, no doubt, the vision of twentieth-century society that as politician and prime minister he sought to implement, owes far more to late-Victorian Canadian thought than has commonly been recognized. For a discussion of King's intellectual antecedents in the Victorian Canadian movement for social reform, see also Cook 196-213.

Chapter 4: Robert Barr

[1] Robert Barr, "'And What Good Came of it at Last?' Quoth Little Peterkin" 386. This article is divided into three sections, "The Future of the United States," "The Future of Canada," and "The Future of Britain." The latter two sections were also published, under the title of the original article, in The Canadian Magazine, Oct. 1905: 490-3.

[2] A reprint of the article (both parts) has been included, for example, in the University of Toronto's reprint of Barr's The Measure of the Rule (3-27); a reprint of Part 2 of the article has been included in Ballstadt, ed., The Search for English-Canadian Literature (61-76).

[3] Barr's remaining fiction also warrants closer examination, particularly since his subtle humour and irony is often deceptive. For an examination of Barr's short stories and some observations about Barr's "non-serious" writing, see Parr 11-21.

[4] In the Idler editorial a few month's following, Barr again noted this "invasion," as he called it, this time by way of what he felt were some alarming statistics. "Up to the end of last year [1902]," he wrote, "86,000 settlers from the United States have . . . taken up farms in Canada. . . . [, and] it is estimated that before this year [1903] is closed an equal number of American citizens will have made the Dominion their home. . . . Hitherto the British invasion of Canada has averaged only 10,000 a year. . . . [although] last year . . . the total increased to something like 20,000" (editorial, Idler Mar. 1903, 759).

[5] See Barr, editorial, Idler Oct. 1903: 218-24. In this article, Barr supplied his readers with a brief profile of Haliburton--"the W. W. Jacobs of his day," he described him--and observed, with a reprinted Sam Slick tale in support, that Haliburton's famous Yankee is "universally regarded"--even by "Americans themselves"--as "a correct, if humourously exaggerated piece of characterization" (220). While Barr's lighter comedy In the Midst of Alarms (which includes a passing allusion to Haliburton's Slick [97]) most clearly reveals the Haliburton influence, even the darker The Victors, as disturbing a work as it is, is still essentially also a comedy, if a black one, that too suggests the Haliburton interest and influence: Pat Maguire, the Yankee hustler of that novel, is a sardonic Yankee Sam Slick with depth of characterization. It should be noted, too, that Barr was also a keen admirer of Mark Twain. Barr had met Twain and, indeed, had intended to write the American

writer's biography, although all that seems to have come of the plan was a three-part biographical sketch in The Idler ("Tramps"; "More"; and editorial, Idler Aug. 1910). Barr's writing, and such interests and influences as his writing shows, would suggest that Barr belongs, not only in the Canadian humourist-satiric tradition of Thomas McCulloch, Haliburton, and Stephen Leacock, but also in the larger North American tradition of that kind which includes Twain.

[6] See Barr, "Me and the Militia" 159-63. During his period of militia service, Barr did not become engaged in any military action; or, as he put it in this article: "since the Minitia [sic] and myself joined forces, no invader . . . dared to set hostile foot upon the free soil of the Dominion." If he did not see fighting, however, it was not that he did not want to fight: "it gives me deep regret to put on record," wrote Barr, "the fact that the troops we all unanimously desired to fight were those of the British Regular Army, and this entirely without any feeling of disloyalty towards the Old Country." In the article, Barr was especially contemptuous of the British regular officers sent from nearby London to drill the St. Thomas Volunteers. According to Barr, the typical British officer "despis[ed]" the Volunteers, who were "Colonials in his estimation" and amateurs besides. The "only mistake the St. Thomas Militia made," however, Barr concluded, was that it "allowed so many Regular officers to return alive to London" (160). Indeed, cutting through the humour that only thinly disguises the strength of Barr's feeling on matter, even nearly half a century after the experience, the article is clear evidence of the strength of the mythology surrounding the nineteenth-century Canadian militia--the Volunteers' self-reliance and loyalty and the British Regulars' incompetence--and, if Barr's recollection of his experiences are true, the article is also evidence also of the extent to which that mythology had some basis in reality.

[7] The novel does portray, if only in the background, the Canadian rural family of the future--the Howards, neighbours to the Bartletts. "The whole Howard lot's a stuck-up set," in old Hiram Bartlett's estimation. Mrs. Bartlett, for her part, doesn't "know what farming is coming to." She adds: "Things is very different from what they was when I was a girl. Then a farmer's daughter had to work. Now Margaret's got her diploma at a the ladies' college, and Arthur he's begun university. . . . They have a piano there, with the organ moved out into the back room" (51).

[8] Of course, in the United States, as in Canada, idealism did not pass immediately following the waning of social gospel utopianism and the utopianists. As Wiebe

argues, and as we have already noted in our earlier consideration of both Machar and De Mille, it was not until just before, and following, the First World War, that the modern bureaucratic mind began to takes its twentieth-century shape. Ironically, the ideas that "eventually took the fort . . . [, the] bureaucratic ones," says Wiebe, had "filtered through" from the Victorian social reformers, both Christian and, later, secular. Once the "constructs of philosophical idealism" were "gone" (145), however, "gone also was the commitment to bioglogical evolution with its interminable organic analogies" (146). Instead, ideas "peculiarly suited to the fluidity and impersonality of an urban-industrial world" took hold; "the bureaucratic approach had no use for stages of social development or collective intelligence, and its exponents spelled their terms with small letters" (145).

[9] Born in Glasgow, Scotland in September of 1850, and at age four having emigrated to Upper Canada--"bringing his parents with him," as in Leacockian fashion he is reputed to have put it years later--Barr lived in several places in rural Ontario, where his parents farmed; he attended school in Chatham, and in the early 1870's, having been granted a provisional or temporary certificate, Barr taught school for several years in the Chatham area. In January 1873, Barr entered the forty-ninth session of the Toronto Normal School. After the completion of the session--and here *The Measure* and the author's life diverge--Barr taught school in Wallaceburg and in Walkerville, Ontario, and in 1875 he attained the principalship of Central School in Windsor. Having contributed, under the pen name "Luke Sharp," several short humourous sketches to the Bothwell, Ontario *Advance* and the Toronto satiric paper *Grip*, Barr's journalistic break came when, in 1875, a story that had been rejected in Canada was published in the *Detroit Free Press*. On the strength of that contribution, he was offered a position with the paper. Having that year married Eva Bennett of Raleigh, Ontario, he and his wife moved to Detroit where he joined the *Free Press* as a reporter, thereafter becoming a columnist and finally an editor. In 1881, he moved to London, England to establish a British edition of the *Free Press*. In 1892, he helped found *The Idler* and (except for a short time following a libel suit in 1895) served as its editor until 1911. In October of the following year, Barr died at his home in Woldingham, Surrey. See MacKendrick vii-xxi; Allen 545-50; "Canadian Celebrities" 181-2.

[10] In the estimation of DeWitt, a Victorian Canadian commentator on the age, there was no doubt regarding the origin of this "pest." The modern "impatience to get an early start and to make money soon" is a revealing sign,

suggested the commentator, of a new "god of [the] time [,] . . . the god of speed [, whose] headquarters of . . . worship are on this continent, in the United States, where to live fast, eat fast, ride fast, and die suddenly, is the rule" (29).

[11] For a discussion of Victorian and Victorian Canadian concepts and styles of architecture and, more specifically, for a consideration of architectural style of the Universtiy of Toronto, see Gowans.

[12] It should be noted that The Victors's attempt to recognize the moral value of a university education seems in part to have been motivated by practical circumstance: the novel was dedicated to the University of Michigan, a return tribute, in effect, since the university had granted Barr an honourary M.A. the year before the novel's publication.

[13] Though he rejected socialism for Britain or the Empire, Barr, it seems, did not completely reject it. He predicted, for example, that socialism had a future in America (with Democrat William Jennings Bryan as President), and perhaps even a useful or necessary future, given the extent, in his estimation, of social degeneracy and political corruption in the United States. See Barr, "Oasis" 105.

[14] Ironically, Barr did not admire Dickens and, indeed, thought him highly overrated and destined for literary obscurity. See Barr, "Literature" pt. 2.

[15] See Berger, Sense of Power 157-8 on the imperialists' perception of American ungodliness. In In the Midst of Alarms it is Dick Yates, of course, who embodies this feature of the American stereotype. Indeed, this flaw in Yates's character is confirmed in masterful comedy when he, having just arrived over the border in the Canadian backwoods where he and Renmark are to camp, is invited to supper at the farm home of the Canadian Bartlett family:

> [Mr. Bartlett] cast [a] . . . glance at his wife, who sat with her hands folded on her lap. . . . Bartlett bent his head over his plate and murmured:
> "For what we are about to receive, oh, make us truly thankful. Amen". . . .
> Now, it happened that Yates, . . . being exceedingly hungry, was making every preparation for the energetic beginning of the meal. He had spent

> most of his life in hotels and New York boarding houses, so that if he ever knew the adage, "Grace before meat," he had forgotten it. In the midst of his preparations came the devout words, and they came upon him as a stupefying surprise. Although naturally a resourceful man, he was not quick enough this time to cover the confusion. Miss Bartlett's golden head was bowed, but out of the corner of her eye she saw Yates' look of amazed bewilderment, and his sudden halt of surprise. When all heads were raised, the young girl's still remained where it was, while her plump shoulders quivered. Then she covered her face with her apron, and the silvery ripple of laughter came like a smothered musical chime trickling through her fingers. (49-50)

[16] Barr's novel consists of a series of sometimes diverse sketches relating Prentiss's various experiences at the Normal School; that Barr intended the Prentiss-Arbuthnot romance to be the unifying element of the novel, however, is suggested by the title, which refers to the rule that Prentiss and Arbuthnot violate the moment they begin their romance. The novel's title, furthermore, is taken from II Corinthians 10: 13: ". . . According to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you." The novel was serialized in The Idler, beginning in June 1907, and that serialized version, at least, includes the Biblical fragment as the novel's epigraph; the University of Toronto reprint of the novel does not include it.

[17] Dr. Darnell, according to Louis K. MacKendrick, "is a caricature of the authoritarian minister and grammarian H. W. Davies, third Principal of the Normal School (1871-1884)" (xvii). MacKendrick notes as well that the Normal School faculty in the novel are also suggested by actual faculty of the school. Perhaps the most provocative caricature is that of the novel's John Brent, the ruthless Head of the Normal School's Model School, whose character Barr based on the famous Ontario educator James L. Hughes, Head of the actual Boy's Model school from 1871 to 1874, and later Inspector of Public Schools for Toronto.

[18] As MacKendrick also notes, Barr helped Crane through many of the latter's "petty financial crises." Barr also completed Crane's unfinished novel The O'Ruddy, and in the estimation of at least one Crane scholar, Barr's completion of the work shows "more knowledge about people and customs" and a "humour . . . more subtle" than Crane's writing reveals (Gibson 145). For a complete description of the unusual--and unpleasant--circumstances surrounding Crane's novel fragment and Barr's eventual completion of it, see Levenson, introduction xxvi, xlvii-lv, lxvii-lxxi.

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